

THE DESIGN OF THE NECK THAT IS GLUED TO THE TOP OF THE LID.

Some ideas from other instruments.

Brian Lemin. June 2009.

Introduction.

Some time ago I had the need to produce a really loud Mountain dulcimer. Incidentally it was also tuned rather high, rather like a tenor voice. Of course I knew that to increase the volume of the body would increase the volume, but what else to do in the design phase I had to research. To do this I corresponded with other players whom I knew required volume in their playing, for example a Dixieland jazz dulcimer player.

A design suggestion.

I received a number of replies making quite good suggestions. One was to have a long shallow part of the neck over the last part of the sound box. In fact I made it and was quite pleased with the results and thought that this was the answer. Quite a long time after I had finished and used this dulcimer I received a suggestion about using a “bridge-like arch” design for the the neck. This intrigued me; it was simple to do and looked remarkably theoretically correct.

It allowed for much of the top of the sound box to vibrate (however small the amount) and thus bring more vibrations and volume. I was reminded of this when I visited Google images and found this picture. (Which also includes a double bottom... but that is for another occasion)



In this picture you can see the bridge like arches for the full length of the fingerboard.

I actually constructed mine deeper with a wider space between each of the pillars. It was still firm enough to retain the integrity of the flatness of the fingerboard whilst under string tension. (Well there is a lot of glue that helps!)

At this point I want to show you a picture which one of our members posted regarding his “*stick the fingerboard to the top of the lid*” design.



This design of his somewhat replicates my original dulcimer design.

Conclusion.

Both approaches to my dulcimer design improved the production of volume in the dulcimers. Clearly one of our members had a similar idea which I would say (from my dulcimer experience) gave him better volume than if he had stuck the full width/depth neck to the lid without his modification.

I would like to suggest that an “Arched Bridge” design could be volume beneficial for those who want to stick their CBG neck on the top of the box lid. Of course just the part over the lid would be bridge arched with pillars glued down on to the lid.

Perhaps if you decide to try this you might be good enough to let me know how it went.

Thanks for reading this.