

**Hammer Dulcimer Rendezvous 2025**  
**Suggestions & Feedback, Followed by “Save the Dates!” (May 14-17/26)**  
**What went well? What could be improved?**

**1- Facilities — Any suggestions we pass on to Hull Park, with the usual caveats re: their limited budget. (Which is why they appreciate us!)**

**• Comments**

**If anyone knows of any corporations, endowments or wealthy individuals looking to help out the Hull Foundation and Learning Center, they'd love to get a grant to build a couple of class rooms on the property. (Not to be too self-interested, but a couple quiet classrooms would be great for our event – getting workshops away from kitchen noise would be a lovely thing!)**

**Also, if you'd just like to make a tax deductible donation on your own, their website is: <http://hullflc.org>**

**2- Size of Event —**

**This year we intended to cap it at 36 participants, but in the end only got 32, and sadly Liz Douglas, Rick Fogel and Steve Hiatt all have to cancel due to medical issues. So we had 29 participants. (That made it nice for our local heroes, who were able to participate when not leading workshops, but it didn't help the bottom line so much...)**

**It was quite relaxed, but as I mentioned on Saturday (I think?), getting up to around 40 participants would help with the bare bones financial situation. Thanks to the Raffle -- and all the generous donations and ticket buyers -- and to Don MacLane for selling his hammers and giving us the proceeds, we are still in the black, although your humble scribe hesitates to calculate an hourly wage scale for wrangling this soirée. I am happy to report that I did not lose money, though!**

**• Comments**

**3- Workshops / Instructors –**

**For the Intermediate/Advanced groups we continued with the Dots & Solids concept. Folks have been happy, and the instructors are getting the hang of it, too!**

**Do you have constructive feedback that we could provide to our instructors?  
-- Anonymously, of course, except in my case. (I can take it, though, with no hard feelings, so let me know any ways I might be more helpful, as well.)**

**• Colin Beasley**

**• Jody Marshall**

**• Simon Chrisman**

**• Carolyn Cruso**

**• Carl Thor**

**• Jim Wells**

**• Mick Doherty**

**4- Special Sessions/Panel Discussions/Demo — Simon volunteered to lead a Harmony Singing session. Lawrence and Mick started the Dulcimer Duets segment, which morphed into Dulcimer Trios when Simon joined. Then we were lucky enough to have Paul Beck show up with his cymbalom.**

**Comments:**

**What Special Sessions/Panels/Discussion Topics from past years, if any, would you like to see revisited?**

**What Special Sessions/Panels/Discussion Topics would you like to see introduced?**

**5- Jams -- Jim Wells again leant his considerable talent and charm to leading a jam on Saturday night in the Dorm Lobby for the N/I group.**

**Did you participate in jams?**

**• Comments**

**6- Meals – *Chef Chris Botcheos has retired, and Matt Bendel did a good job charging into the breach for the ‘24 Vous.***

***This year we were lucky to find Liz Clements and Andrew Moran (and their colleague Keith, the grill master)!***

***I’m hopeful they can cook for us again next year, but they were so tired by Sunday morning that when I mentioned it Andrew said, “A year is a long time away!” I didn’t press the issue, and will check in after they recuperate :)***

**General meal comments --**

**Specialty diet thoughts/comments –**

**7- Performances/Open Mic —**

**Debbie Lutzky Allen was again “volunteered” for the second year, ran the Open Stage on Friday night. J Ireland and Ellen Eades were charming and graceful stage hands. Paul Beck popped up again and played a Greek tune for us. Los Californios Locos (my name for the Golden Gate Duclimer Club) opted for a “quality over quantity” approach (I think that was the official**

**statement from Club Officers?) which was lovely, although the cries of “Coconuts! Coconuts!” were confusing to new participants.  
Comments/Suggestions?**

**8- Schedule – Let me know what you thought about the schedule, the length of sessions, the amount of free time, types of activities, etc. One change contemplated is to move lunch a half hour later to give a bit longer after breakfast.**

**Comments:**

**9- Likes/changes/additions –**

**What was the one thing you liked the most?**

**What one thing would you change or add?**

**What would you tell someone who was thinking about coming to a (hopeful, we are) 2026 HD ‘Vous?**

**10 - Future instructors -- Which instructor(s) would you like to see at future Rendezvous?**

**11 - Save the Dates!– May 14-17, 2027 are reserved at Hull Park. (As we figured out the final tally and “carried over” the deposit, Tawni mentioned that it has been carried over for more than two decades!**

**As mentioned on Saturday, our numbers were a bit down this year. I may again be sending out an “Early Registration” form sometime after high summer with the “potentially non-refundable” \$50 deposit to save a spot. It helps to get enough commitments early, so we can rest assured we’ll have enough folks to make the ‘Vous happen. I’ve found that if we wait too long on Registration, folks make other plans. Kinda makes sense, huh?**

**At that point, if you’re sure you’re “in” I’ll accept a \$50 “hold my spot” deposit for the first 40 Registrants. If you are committed to coming and can save the dates in your calendar, this would save your spot prior to the “full payment” Registration period, which since Covid has been in January or February. Then, when we get around to the official Registration, your \$50 is credited towards the final bill.**

**If on the other hand, you’ve taken up the bassoon and decided that tuned percussion is not as refined, or have simply made other plans, you instantly become a patron of the Vous, and we let folks know another spot has opened up. Of course, if you let me know early enough that your plans have changed, you’d get your loot back, as early on we don’t worry so much.**

**Finally, just a note about any potential “Waiting List” – this really only works a few months in advance. If we get late cancellations, our experience is that folks on the waiting list have already made plans for May; it’s most useful in January and February.**

**And that’s all I’ve got, for now!**

**Thanks again,**

**Mick**

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