

## Caroline Steinfeld – February 2016

You can find Caroline's knitting patterns at [www.harpcenter.com/Crafts](http://www.harpcenter.com/Crafts)

*I grew up loving music and creative endeavors and was fortunate to have parents who were thoroughly supportive.*

*In elementary school, the first instruments offered were strings. The harp was not one of them, so I started with the violin at age 8. It didn't turn out to be "my" instrument, but I stuck with it through high school. One good thing which came out of the experience was learning to read music, though to this day treble clef comes to me much more easily than bass clef. Eventually I came to miss playing an instrument, and since there was a piano in the house, it seemed like the next logical step.*



*After a few years, I decided piano wasn't portable enough and it was time to learn a new instrument. Too many of my friends already played guitar, so I thought hey, what about the harp? The internet was relatively new at the time, so I searched the web trying to learn about harps. I stumbled across Sylvia Woods' website, which was truly informative and taught me everything I needed to decide on an instrument.*



*So in 2001, my parents bought me my first harp, which is still my favorite. It was a Triplett Celtic II, which I learned to play on my own, using Sylvia's "Teach Yourself the Folk Harp" book and video. Later, I added smaller instruments for travel, a Triplett Avalon and a Harpsicle. Though their smaller size was my primary motivation, I came to appreciate both for their unique voices.*

*For several years, two girlfriends and I played and sang informally for family and friends. Since we combined harps with guitar and mandolin, we called ourselves "Strings Attached." A benefit of playing for small groups is being able to be a sort of harp ambassador. So many people like to hear the harp but are intimidated by the actual instrument. I can't tell you how many have said they've never seen a harp up close before. They seem almost afraid to touch it, so I like to sit them down in the harper's chair and show them how to play a glissando. It's such a treat to see their faces light up when they realize they're playing a harp!*



*In 2006, I learned to knit, and after a few years, I began designing knitting patterns professionally. Perhaps inevitably, the two blended, and some of my patterns began to feature harps. Sometimes they're stylized, but when they're more realistic, I like to base the silhouettes on real instruments, particularly my Celtic II. It has such graceful curves! Even when harps are not directly involved in the patterns, they'll often influence my design process. For instance, a lacy poncho provides warmth and looks dressy but won't fall off my shoulders while I'm playing.*

*Since 2012, Sylvia Woods has offered some of my harp related patterns in the Harpcenter's selection of Craft Pattern PDFs for other harpers who enjoy playing with string of all types.*

*With the harp, I finally found my instrument. Though I have no plans to play professionally, I truly enjoy playing as a hobby and sharing the music with others, and I hope to continue to do so for a long time to come!*

-- Caroline Steinford

