



San Francisco Accordion Club
APRIL 2013
NEWSLETTER
PERFORMING April 21, 2013

Bonnie Birch



Our Featured Performer and first time honoree for the Val Kieser memorial performance is Bonnie Birch. Many of you made donations to SFAC in Val's honor, and the Board has decided to use that money to bring in special performers that we know Val would have enjoyed.

Bonnie is one of the Northwest's finest accordionists, performing a versatile repertoire of American, European Continental (French, Italian, etc), and classical music. She performs as a soloist as well as working with a wide variety of musicians and singers. Although based in Seattle, Bonnie has been a member of the SFAC for many years. We last saw her when she came to perform at the Tribute to Val Keiser in April of 2012.

Bonnie's varied audience includes restaurants, weddings, corporate events, family events, and artistic organizations. She is president of the Northwest Accordion Society and chairman of the Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration.

Kay Patterson playing Warm Up

This student of Peter Di Bono is a relative newcomer to accordion, but a lifelong musician, primarily as a classical pianist and teacher. She is a Phi Beta Kappa music graduate of U.C., Berkeley, and teaches privately at her studio in Fair Oaks (in the Sacramento area).

She began studying accordion in September of 2011, first with Dave Chelini in Sacramento, and then with Peter this past August. Her goal was to play at her husband's family winery, The Nichelini Family Winery in Napa Valley, which she has been doing for about a year now.

She is working on developing a style and repertoire that will go well with both the historic Italian-Swiss heritage of the winery, and also complement the fine Bordeaux-style wines being produced there. Hopefully, the ambience of live music will make visitors enjoy their stays more, and encourage them to take some wine home for later enjoyment.



cont. >

Sabra Daly

Although piano accordion lessons were inflicted upon this poor innocent at an early age, she gave up the instrument as soon as she hit junior high school and discovered that accordions aren't "cool !" (Who knew?!)

After high school, however, she fell in with a group of players at The Starry Plough Irish pub, a group of bon vivants, reprobates and bad influences, and learned Irish music the old-fashioned way, by ear. There she met her husband, **Peter Heelan**, an Irish Uilleann piper and guitar player, and has had many happy years playing button accordion and concertina.

Sabra has eschewed the fame and fortune that usually accompany the practice of the Irish music idiom (HA! HA! HA!), and plays in small groups at pubs, parties, sessions, and festivals.



Sabra Daly

Frank Montoro

Past president of the San Francisco Accordion Club will play a short set of his "all time favorite" music. Frank began playing accordion at age 11, studying with Frank Gilmore when he was with Wurlitzer in San Francisco. Frank has had a long career as an accordionist, playing in San Francisco and Marin in various hotels, restaurants, and other venues.

Frank will be 90 years old this November, but he is still going strong and helps SFAC by doing the mailing for the hard copy of our monthly newsletter. Thanks Frank! What would we do without you?

March Meeting 2013

Lynn Ewing started the meeting with a brief overview of the performers – all Russian, including Iosif Purits, on tour from Moscow. Anne Metais was emcee for this historic meeting.

Grigory Krumik began with a demonstration of the traditional bayan and its' special attributes. (*see article, p. 6*) He played several solo tunes, including a Ukrainian polka and *Kalinka*. In Slavic music, the speed often varies during the piece, sometimes tripling from a slow introduction. Gregory is a master of meter.

Noting that Passover was coming up, he played several Klezmer pieces, ending with *Hava Nagila*. He then introduced tenor **Vladimir Zavadsky**, who sang two folk songs. The first was *Linden Tree*, about a young girl who is forbidden to marry her love. The second was the Ukrainian *Dark Brows, Brown Eyes*, about a happier situation. Grigory's accompaniment showed how effective the bayan can be in this song.

As a surprise two young boys dressed in traditional Cossack military uniforms took the stage. They are members of **Sivka-Burka**, a Russian folk children's choir founded in 2001 in Redwood City, and are the sons of Jonna Wilson. **Alexander**, the oldest, played accordion and sang, while the younger boy passed out wristbands to the audience (*a custom in Russia*) and then performed a Russian dance. It was a stunning performance of two short tunes – people were on their feet to get a better view.



Vladimir Zavadsky

Grigory and Vladimir returned with two more pieces. The first was about a pair of sweethearts who step out publicly for the first time on the Volga waterfront. The second was about a brave young man who offered to take his new sweetheart on a coach ride. You do not have to be Russian to understand this theme.

Just before the break, Iosif gave us a little preview of what was to come in the second half of the meeting. Iosif is 24 years old and a student of Friedrich Lips in Moscow, who is world-famous for demanding and getting the best out of the highly capable players he is willing to teach. Iosif is the winner of many international awards, including the First Prize in 2009 at the 34th Edition of the Castelfidardo International Accordion Competition, and has completed several world tours.

Iosif's goal is to make the accordion an instrument for serious music, not just folk music and entertainment roles. He played Vivaldi's *Winter*, followed by *Recollections of the Waltz* by Valery Gavrilin and the Liszt etude *La Campanella* based on the theme from the final movement of Paganini's *Violin Concerto No. 2*. Iosif showed what the bayan is capable of in the hands of a master. He showed great depth of feeling with subtle changes in dynamics, speed and volume. At times the music sounded like a string quartet with woodwinds.

Following the break, Iosif played for more than an hour. *Fantasia in memory of Alfred Schnittke*, composed by Efram Podgaitis, included percussion on the body of the bayan. One member of the audience later said that if she closed her eyes, it sounded as if a whole orchestra was playing. He played all of these compositions from memory. He continued with *Ave Maria* by Ástor Piazzolla.

Tears is an aggressive modern piece by Ben-Sørensen. Iosif introduced his last piece as a favorite of Vladimir Horowitz: Franz Liszt's *Rakoczy March*. The piece contained major tempo changes, volume dynamics, and incredible runs. It was a privilege to listen to a true virtuoso.



Grigory Krumik



Alexander Wilson



Iosif Purits

Two Tips On Sight Reading by Jim Holliday (Bay Area Accordion Club)

Sight reading is a matter of seeing a note on a staff, identifying the note, locating its exact left hand keyboard position and then playing it. **Location of a note** can be aided by developing tactile awareness, or touch sensitivity in the fingers. The right hand fingers can use the groups of two and three black keys as "feelers" to assist while the fingers of the left hand use marked bass buttons.

Identifying notes, using lines can be a lifelong two different clefs with their respective problem for some of us. Here are two tips that MAY be of some help to those people.
a note on a staff,
or right hand

Method 1: Emphasize the **upper four lines** of the Treble Clef, and the **lower four lines** of the Bass Clef. This creates two 4 line clefs that are identical to each other, and three **space areas** that are identical to each other. The note **C** is always in the center of each 4 line clef AND always two ledger lines above, or below each clef.

TWO 4 line clefs

THREE space areas

Method 2: Whenever you look at a bass clef, mentally visualize an extra line under the clef. This is an **E** line which then converts the bass clef to sight read exactly the same as the treble clef.

President's Message

I thought everyone might be interested in learning a little more about Iosif Purits' life, and what it takes to become the caliber of musician he is. Iosif is 24 years old, and lives in Moscow with his mother. His father was a well known bayanist and teacher, and began to teach him Bayan at age 6. Unfortunately, his father died after a sudden illness when Iosif was 8 years old, and his mother then took up his primary music education.

He has pursued a serious musical education for his entire young life, and hopes to have a career as a professional musician. He is still completing his studies in Russia, where he meets with Professor Freidrich Lips twice a month for intensive lessons. He continues to perform and compete internationally, and routinely plays 60 to 70 concerts a year.

Iosif practices about 6 hours a day, and it takes him about a month to learn a new piece, and anywhere from 2-4 months to perfect it. In preparing a piece for competition, Iosif tries to perform 3 or 4 concerts before competitions in order to give the new pieces a "trial run" on stage. He is not able to perform his normal diverse concert repertoire because competitions are usually 60-70% contemporary modern music. Therefore, he tries to arrange a few free concerts in Moscow music schools or colleges where he can play his competition program.

When not studying music, he enjoys mountaineering, and has climbed several big peaks. He also is interested in languages, and after teaching himself English with the help of the internet, films, and literature, he is now learning Spanish.

Lynn Ewing

Illness at March Club Meeting

It is with regret that we report that there was an outbreak of the "Noro virus" at our last club meeting. This is sometimes called "The Cruise Ship Disease", because it is highly contagious and is responsible for most of the severe gastrointestinal disease in the US. It can be caused by many factors, and we will probably never know what exactly was responsible. Not everyone who ate got sick, but many people did, and some even ended up in the hospital.

Because of the seriousness of this event, your Board has decided to suspend food service at our meetings, and will reduce the entry fee for the meeting from \$6 back to \$5 for members. All of the people at Oyster Point have been informed, and have been very cooperative in investigating this outbreak.

If you had flu like symptoms on the Monday or Tuesday following the March meeting, and have not already done so, you may report it to the San Mateo County Health Department at 650-372-6200. Please allow 5-10 minutes to answer questions.

We are extremely sorry that anyone had to suffer this nasty illness, and hope you will understand that we feel it necessary to discontinue providing food. However- you are welcome to bring your own snacks with you, and we'll continue to provide coffee and tea.

Sincerely,

*The San Francisco Accordion Club Board
Lynn Ewing, Dominic Palmisano,
Mike Zampiceni, Maryanne Romanowski,
Jean Moshofsky Butler, Scotty Williamson,
Don Nurisso and Vince Rinaldi*

Thanks to Jim Holliday for providing the article on sight reading (previous page). Jim has been unable to attend our meetings for several months due to health issues. We miss you, Jim!

WHAT IS A BAYAN?

At the spectacular March meeting of the San Francisco Accordion Club, member Grigory Krumik accompanied singer Vladimir Zavag-sky on a specially crafted Bayan, and twenty-four-year-old Iosif Purits, from Russia, played a stellar concert on his “Jupiter” model Bayan. Like our accordions, the Bayan is a “free-reed aerophone” which appeared 100 years ago in Russia and was named after the sixteenth century Russian bard “Bayan”. The basic construction has not changed in over 100 years, nor has the way it is made, at least in the main factory in Moscow.

Grigory’s Bayan is an original, handcrafted Bayan, which was made especially for him. It has no register switches and has a very particular sound. Grigory talked about the layout of the right hand buttons in 3 rows. It makes big jumps easier than on the piano accordion keyboard, and it makes improvisation and accompaniment somewhat easier as well. The bass is the same Stradella system that most piano accordions have. Iosif’s Bayan, a concert model which was also made in Russia, has 5 rows, and includes a free bass with a converter in the left hand, as well as register switches. It is a heavy instrument, weighing approximately 32 pounds.

Some of the differences between the Bayan and our piano-keyboard accordion are physical and others are musical:

Among the physical: 1) The right hand keyboard is attached slightly forward for easier dexterity; 2) a fifth octave has been added to the bass to match the lower register of “bass” Russian singers; 3) Register switches are normally on top, operated by chin for rapid changes; 4) In place of the piano keyboard is the five-row button keyboard arranged in the type “B” system (Moscow system); see diagram below.

Some musical differences are: 1) Reeds are broader and of rectangular shape rather than trapezoidal, impacting the sound on the attack of a note, and the harmonics. This also allows for a cleaner, more efficient and discreet “bellows shake”. (Iosif Purits demonstrated this feature in the Vivaldi “Winter”); 2) On some Bayans the reeds are made out of Titanium, sturdier than steel 3) Reeds are screwed into large metal plates in groups, which are

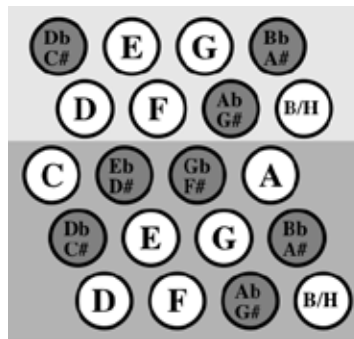
screwed to the wooden resonating board, resulting in a mellow sound. 4) Left-hand side has a converter switch to free-base.

The Bayan is the required accordion-type instrument for conservatory studies in many countries (Russia, France,...), to distinguish it from its light-hearted cousin the “musette-tuned” accordion, making it more adaptable to classical virtuoso musical works.

Notes:

1-Friedrich Lips, virtuoso of the Bayan and teacher of our star guest performer, is also author of a book, “THE ART OF BAYAN PLAYING, Technique, Interpretation, and Performance of Playing the Accordion Artistically.” Chromatic button system (type B), usually called Moscow system, most Russian Bayans have this system.

By Anne Metais



The San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble

under the direction of
Joe Smiell, Jr.
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a program
of
classical music

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For Information: Frank Montoro
650-574-4757

or email: Lynn Ewing
info@sfaccordionclub.com

Al Iorio, Pioneer Accordion Maker dies at 94

Amedeo “Al” Iorio, a mechanical engineer from Cresskill, N.J., hailed from a family of accordion makers. Little wonder that he engineered a better accordion. Iorio, who died Monday at 94, developed the first successful electronic accordion, called the Accorgan—a veritable orchestra in a squeezebox, thanks to an embedded chip.

“If Al had never developed the electronic sounds, the accordion would not be recognized as an instrument which could be played in many musical venues,” said Norman Seaton, president of the National Accordion Association. “He was definitely a pioneer,” Seaton said. Iorio’s forebears began in the music business in the mid-19th century in Italy. His father, Candido, opened an accordion shop in Manhattan in 1907. Iorio, with a mechanical engineering degree from Stevens Institute of Technology, transformed the business, renamed it the **Iorio Syn-Cordion Musical Instrument Co.**

and moved it to an Englewood, N.J., industrial park. Iorio was an unabashed champion of the accordion, an instrument that, for many, conjures memories of Lawrence Welk and polka bands. “The accordion will never die out,” he said in a 2002 interview with *The Record*. “There’s still a lot of business out there, and the new computerized keyboards are always advancing themselves.”

As for his own musical prowess, Iorio “didn’t go out and play gigs, but he played the accordion well enough to be able to demonstrate and sell it.” said a niece, Denise Grasing of Leonia, N.J.



Iorio continued in his line of work after the business closed. “His garage was full of accordion parts, and you could always call him,” said Guenadiy Lazarov, owner of Accordion Gallery, a sales and service business in Roxbury, N.J.

“He was proud of his family’s legacy, and it was a blessing for him to still do what he enjoyed.” Iorio, an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II, is survived by his wife, Gloria; a sister, Norma Ferraro of Long Island; a granddaughter and a great-granddaughter. His son, Ken, who co-owned the family business, died in 1996.

Jay Levin, The Record, Hackensack, N.J.

Condolences

We extend our sympathy to the family of club members Henry Nicora, who passed away in December. He and his wife Anna have been members of SFAC for many years.

Performing Around the Bay

Steve Balich • North Bay
www.stevebalichband.com

Ron Borelli • San Mateo
rborelli@aol.com

Renée de la Prade
Culann's Hounds, San Francisco
www.sfhounds.com

Richard Denier • Carmel
rdenier@sbcglobal.net

Peter Di Bono • San Francisco
www.peterdibono.com

Reno Di Bono • South Bay
ourhike@aol.com

William De Michelis • South Bay
wdd777@comcast.net

Joe Domitrowich • South Bay
www.capricious-accordion.com or
www.alpinersusa.com

Due Zighi Baci, (Sheri Mignano)
San Francisco
www.eurocafemusic.com or
zighi@sonic.net

Skyler Fell, Hobo Gobelins
Oakland
www.myspace.com/hobogobelins

Ed Gorzynski, Jr. • East Bay
edspolkas@yahoo.com

Bruce Kirschner & The Klezmakers
kirschner@aol.com
www.klezmakers.com

Big Lou, aka Linda Seekins • San Francisco
www.accordionprincess.com

Mad Maggies • San Francisco
themadmaggies.com

Don Nurisso • Pacifica
don@nurisso.com

Rob Reich • East Bay & San Francisco
robbyreichmusic@gmail.com

Diana Strong • Pacifica
don@nurisso.com

Tangonero
http://tangonero.com

Whiskey and Women •
www.whiskeyandwomenmusic.com

Thank you to Renewing Members

We depend on your memberships and donations to hold our meetings at the beautiful Oyster Point Yacht Club. Most of you received a personal renewal in the US Mail, with a self addressed envelope to Mike Zampiceni back in September, and sent it in, and all is well.

If you are receiving this newsletter, congratulations! Your membership is current! Thanks for supporting the San Francisco Accordion Club. See you at our next fantastic meeting, featuring IOSIF PURITS all the way from Russia.

SFAC Newsletter Ad Policy

Members may place one small ad (business-card-size) for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$10 per issue or \$100 per year.

Monthly ad prices for members: quarter-page ad \$25.00; half-page ad \$50, and a full-page ad \$100. Non-member rates are double the member rates.

A flyer (no larger than 5" x 8") advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$50 for members, \$65 for non-members.

PLAY FOR US!

Playing warm up or during the break is a great, casual way to share your talent and hone your performance skills. Although our featured performers are scheduled almost all the way through June, we have lots of opportunities during the first part of the meeting for people who would like to play a short 10 or 15 minute set, or even just a couple of songs. Contact Dominic Palmisano at 415-587-4423 or email accord47@gmail.com, or Lynn Ewing, 650-453-3391, or ewinglynn@gmail.com

Scholarship Information

Scholarship Applications are due in MARCH to be awarded in April. Twice a year, our club awards scholarships to accordion students who have a financial need and demonstrate dedication to pursuing their study of the accordion. Students must study with a teacher who is an SFAC member in good standing. Applications can be obtained by emailing **Mike Zampiceni**, @eclecticguy@comcast.net and should be returned to him at: 220 Tasman Dr, #106, Sunnyvale, CA 94089

Please Remember!

To leave our meeting hall at the Oyster Point Yacht Club clean! Clean up food or drink spills and recycle all trash.

ACCORDION EVENTS

Festival for the Accordionists and Teachers Guild, Int'l will be held in the CHICAGO area, Wed., July 17th- Sat. July 20, 2013. Concerts! Workshops! Competitions! Exhibits! For details, see the ATG website, www.accordions.com/atg or contact Betty Jo Simon, president, 913) 888-4706

AAA Convention - American Accordionists Association 75th Anniversary Celebration
August 14-18, 2013
The New Yorker Hotel
481 Eighth Avenue at 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
<http://www.ameraccord.com/>

the 66th Couple Mondiale will be held August 17-25, 2013, in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

<http://www.coupemondiale.org>

Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration June 20-23, 2013
Leavenworth WA
505 Highway 2, Leavenworth, WA 98826
800-961-0162
info@iciclevillage.com

Accordion music at its finest: jazz, popular, classical, ethnic and everything in between pulses through the village as musicians (children through seniors) and music lovers flock to Leavenworth to compete for awards and cash, attend workshops, jam sessions, a film/video series, parade down Front Street and enjoy four nights of concerts and dances with world class musicians. Sponsored by the Northwest Accordion Society.

Enjoy events at the Grange Hall, the Gazebo, and the Festhalle. This year the Grange Hall will be used as the education center. The upper floor will host performance space and the lower level for workshops. The Gazebo will have both professional and amateur players entertaining visitors. The Festhalle will have vendor displays in the foyer and the main hall will host the competition and concerts.

Nearby Club Meetings

Accordion Club of the Redwoods

3rd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Hermann Sons Hall • 860 Western, Petaluma, CA
\$3 admission donation Contact: Tony Mustaro—
President (707) 318-0474; dcdacapo@gmail.com

Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC)

President/CEO: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359
gsaccordionclub.net/firms.com

The Vacaville Chapter meets monthly on the second
Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Pietro's No. 2 at
679 Merchant Street, Vacaville, CA 95688
707 448-4588

The Humboldt Chapter meets monthly on the third
Tuesday, 7 p.m. at Humboldt Swiss Club, 5403
Tompkins Hill Road, Loleta.

The Sacramento Chapter meets monthly on the fourth
Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory, 12401
Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. Contact for all three
Chapters: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359

Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC)

meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 7 p.m. at
Escalon Community Center, 1055 Escalon Ave,
Escalon. Contact: (209) 545-3603

Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS)
meets monthly on the first Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. at
Lutheran Church Hall, 6365 Douglas, Blvd, off Hwy
80, Granite Bay, CA. Contact: Jerry Choate (530)
345-2031

Silicon Valley Accordion Club (SVAC)

meets 1st Sun. of each month at Harry's Hofbrau, 390
Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, corner of Kiely.
1 p.m. \$5, under 16 - no charge.

Accordion Instruction

Bart Beninco (707) 769-8744
Ron Borelli (650) 574-5707
David Chelini (916) 428-8764
Peter Di Bono (415) 753-1502
Lynn Ewing (650) 453-3391
Skyler Fell (415) 596-5952
Lou Jacklich (510) 317-9510
Marjorie Konrad (707) 539-5308
Marian Kelly (650) 854-1896
Vincent Rinaldi (415) 824-7609
Big Lou (Linda Seekins) (415) 468 5986
Joe Simoni (650) 867-1122
Sharon Walters-Greyhosky (650) 731-6010
Richard Yaus (650) 832-1740
Mike Zampiceni (408) 569-2579
Norma Zonay-Parsons (408) 246-3073

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aswy01@gmail.com

Newsletter

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We are looking forward to the 14th Annual Convention coming up on October 28th, 2013. In the coming months, we will be updating the site with information about the events, classes and performers. Check back often! Registrations are currently being accepted online. Register early for extra savings as well as the opportunity to choose premium seats when checking in at the event. Dinner seating will be assigned this year after you check in and pick up your packet.

**Join us on (almost every!) third sunday of the month
at the Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd, South San Francisco**

**Club & Musical Meeting • next meeting April 21 @ 2 p.m.
Admission: \$5 members, \$7 guests**

no JAM session this month.

DIRECTIONS:

From 101 traveling either North or South, take the Oyster Point exit. Turn right onto Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right onto Gull Drive, just before Marina Blvd.) Continue past the gate house to the sign Oyster Point Yacht Club. There is plenty of parking and ramp access.
Visit us online @ www.sfaccordionclub.com

SFAC Membership is

\$30.00 per year for individual or family.
Meeting admission is \$5 per member & \$7 per guest. For membership renewal, please send a check to: S.F.A.C., c/o Corinne Chandel, 1910 Mt Vernon Ct #19, Mountain View, CA 94040
NEW MEMBERS, please include your name and address along with your check, as well as a phone number and email address, if you wish.

**Newsletter of the
San Francisco Accordion Club**

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www.sfaccordionclub.com



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