



Official Instrument of San Francisco
 1912 ♪ *The World's First Accordion Club* ♪ 2008

August 17, 2008 Music:
Alex Roitman, Student of Peter Di Bono; and Peter
The Don Nurisso Trio
Bruce Kirschner and The Klezmakers
There will also be a short business meeting regarding
changes to the By-Laws and Nominations for Election in September

President's Message

Over the span of the past eighteen years our members have heard musicians who have played a great variety of ethnic music for us. As a nation of immigrants whose ancestors brought with them their language, traditions and customs from all over the world, we have incorporated these to make our country truly unique. No element is more important in preserving cultures than through the language of music.

This month we look forward to presenting a program of Klezmer music by Dr. Bruce Kirschner and his orchestra, The Klezmakers. For those of you who might not be familiar with this art form, here is a brief history and description of Klezmer.

Although we are not sure how far back the tradition of Klezmer goes, some of the references go back to the 16th century. The birthplace of this music can be traced to Eastern Europe. Several million Jews came to the U.S. between 1880 and 1924, bringing with them this musical

form. Today there are groups playing Klezmer everywhere for all kinds of occasions. Basically a dance form, folk melodies found their way into the Klezmer repertoire along with the dances.

I like to listen to the different kinds of sounds that the clarinet plays in Klezmer, such as chirps and bended notes. It makes the music interesting and adds humor to the pieces.

Talk about variety, Klezmer offers moods to fit every occasion. Most of us are familiar with the tune *Hava Nagila*. It is a Hora. There are many, many different Horas in the Klezmer musicians' repertoire. Here are some other forms: Doinas, Bulgars and Freylekhs. If you are old enough to remember Benny Goodman's arrangement of *And the Angels Sing*, that piece was a Freylekh. Ziggy Elman was the featured clarinetist who made the piece famous at the time.

Rhythms, accents and meter combine to make Klezmer a listening treat. If you want to know more about Klezmer, I will have with me on Sunday copies of a publication Bruce made available to me. Enjoy.

Frank Montoro

Directions to Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd., South San Francisco

From 101 traveling either north or south, take Oyster Point exit. Turn right on Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right on Gull Drive, just before Marina Blvd.). Continue past gate house to sign "Oyster Point Yacht Club." There is plenty of parking and ramp access.

We're back to reconstructing our Website—stay tuned—it won't be long!

The Picnic: Our Biggest ever!

We had a record crowd of over 115 attendees! I didn't take notes but I did take a lot of photos! This was a very unusual picnic—the weather was chilly and windy and so we had the picnic entirely indoors at our beautiful Oyster Point Yacht Club venue. It worked out well because Tuti was able to have her crew serve us individually—that's right, no standing in line for food! And what food! The barbecued chicken, pasta salad, potato salad, and other side dishes were the perfect ticket.

Several people brought friends, including Lore Warren who brought some of her German friends, making the occasion even more fun. And what a special treat to have our wonderful **Vince Cirelli** among us again!

Several players contributed to the ambient music before dinner: **Jim Firpo**, **Lore Warren** playing some great German music, **Bob Smith**, **Pres. Frank Montoro**, **Johan Gullmes** (whom we rarely get to hear at all!), **Jerry Choate** from Chico, and **Yours Truly** (Val).

Several people came from other clubs, a very kind gesture. **Harry and Dee Cannata** and **André Paris** were just a few of them. **Anne and Bernard Métais** brought their adorable granddaughter **Alexia Marteau**, visiting from France for the summer.

Xavier de la Prade from the North Bay had some beautiful, colorful windsocks for sale, representing France, Italy, the U.S. and others, and he generously donated the proceeds to our club. Many thanks, Xavier!

The music program opened with the **San Francisco Accordion Band** (a.k.a. the "Fun Band"), playing for about a half hour. Without a doubt **Gwyn Lister**, with her Sax and cool dark glasses and cap, was the star of the band! Band players at the picnic were: **Gwyn Lister**, **Anne Métais**, **Frank Schlotter**, **Telmo Echeverría**, **Bob Smith**, **Randy Hicks**, **Barbara and Vic Corsiglia**, **Mel Schwing**, **Sue Hirigoyen**, **Maryanne Romanowski**, **Judy Dale**, **Scott Williamson**, and **Val**. (I apologize if I left anyone out!)

The sign-up sheet for players quickly filled up with 11 players: **Taffy Steffen** (from Sacramento) and **Diane Blais** (from Vacaville) playing together; **Ed Mas-solo** (how very special it was to hear Ed again); **Yours Truly** (Val); **Roger Cromwell**; **Bob Smith**; **Ron Harris**; **Aldo Argenti**; **Jerry Choate**; **Lynn Ewing** (who seldom plays alone!); and **Michael Sanossian** (we need to hear from you more often, Michael!). All the players did a great job and were extremely well received by an enthusiastic audience. Our thanks to all who participated as well as all who came to enjoy the "picnic."

Our board made note of ways we can improve the picnic for next year—so stay tuned and ready to come again!
Val



Sue Hirigoyen arriving



"Cool" Gwyn Lister with Sax



Maryanne Romanowski arriving



The Fun Band (photo thanks to Bernard Métais)



Frank Montoro



Diane Blais and Taffy Steffen



Jerry Choate



Pres. Frank Montoro and Ron Harris



Aldo Argenti



Alexia and Grandpa Bernard Métais



Diane Blais, Taffy Steffen, Roger Cromwell



The German Table including Club Secretary Lore Warren (second from right)



Lynn Ewing



Welcome Back, Vince Cirelli!



Michael Sanossian



Roger Cromwell



Bob Smith



Xavier de la Prade; Anne Métais & grand-daughter Alexia Marteau (from France) who got a colorful French windsock



Fun Band members Vic & Barbara Corsiglia And Telmo Echeverría



The North Bay contingent including André Paris (left), Harry Cannata (third from left) and Dee Cannata (right)



Spotted on Lynn Ewing's T-shirt (Artist: Joan Grauman)



Spotted on Taffy Steffen's T-shirt (by Gypsy Squeezewear)



Pres. Frank Montoro with our wonderful cateress, Tuti



Galla-Rini Accordion Camp

If you missed it, you missed a terrific learning experience, participation in a 36-piece accordion orchestra, and a lot of fun! Xavier de la Prade came to my rescue in writing about the camp, but I'd like to add in a few tidbits of my own.

Sharon Greyhosky was sporting a broken foot, riding around campus in an electric cart, to the envy of all of us who "walked the long walk" between the beautiful, modern dorms, the cafeteria and the Creekside Room where we held our rehearsals and evening dance parties. Sharon's faithful hubby, Gus, was always at her side, wheeling her accordion for her.

The "Pre-Camp" party was held at my house this year. We had about 16 very enthusiastic campers, including the three from San Diego: Sharon Marotte (SFAC member), Victoria Eriqat, and Kjell Holmes (president of A.L.S.I., the San Diego accordion club and SFAC member). Jana Maas and hubby Dan came all the way from Modesto for the party. We had Joe Smiell, Anne and Bernard Métais and their adorable granddaughter Alexia, and Bob Smith, to name a few offhand.

Yours Truly (Val) had the special pleasure of having two campers, SFAC member Carley Koliha of Billings, MT and Brian Money of Victoria, B.C. as my houseguests before and after the camp. I've known these two very special people since 1992, the first year I attended Galla-Rini Camp (at Silver Falls, OR at that time) and we are still fast friends.

Now let's hear from Xavier de la Prade about the camp and the concert. _____ Val

Galla-Rini Camp 2008

If there's an accordion heaven on earth, it has to be the Galla-Rini Camp. Where else can you go, arriving somewhat apprehensive and five days later leaving with life-long friends who have as a common bond an instrument? I had never attended a Galla-Rini camp because I felt my accordion background was too basic. I also thought we would just be jamming and performing oompah-pah music. Plus the word "camp" is sort of a misnomer. You don't think of camp as a learning experience. How wrong I was. In a few days, our Maestro Joe Smiell put together an outstanding symphony orchestra consisting of only accordionists and a percussionist. He achieves this by arranging music in ten parts. The accordionists are allowed to play in a single reed only, either the bassoon or the clarinet. With perfect pitch and a lot of practice, Joe makes even the weakest player look good. None of our parts have been simplified, but each accordionist adapts to his or her skill level quickly. In my case, I played one or two notes for triads or skipped every other note in a series of ascending notes for the Galla-Rini arrangement of "Fascination." Another thing I learned was how to count and keep time with other performers. The whole week was a week of applied music theory.

My helper was Valerie Kieser. She was fantastic in filling in the parts where her two novitiates were lacking. Valerie was always so diplomatic. She would gently let me know if I was behind a measure or didn't play a staccato.

Our schedule was so full we hardly saw time go by. By 8:45 am we were practicing until noon or later; lunch, then practice until 4:30 pm; dinner and then another workshop or individual performances to strut our stuff. My usual was "Chevaliers de la Table Ronde" that Bernard Métais, a native Parisian, helped me ham up. The talent at these performances was out of this world. For example, Marian Kelly gave such a rousing performance of "Fascination" that I asked myself if this woman was born with an accordion strapped to her chest. Another musician from Indiana, and one of our conductors, Esther Lanting, had so many notes on the pages she was playing you could hardly see the page color. What a super talented group of performers!

Campus life was reminiscent of college days. We ate well but did not put on too many pounds because the dorms, the practice locale, and the performance hall were so far apart. We also got tired of chicken. We played the accordion and then ate chicken; in the afternoon we practiced and then ate chicken; with a repeat the next day. After three days of this we all danced the "chicken dance" very well when Frank Montoro played it at our farewell party. After a day of hard work we would either go to the "French Quarter" for wine and music, or to the other end of the dorm area to the "Norwegian Club." There, Kjell Holmes, a Norwegian-American from San Diego and Brian Money from Victoria, Canada would entertain us with great Scandinavian tunes. Clarence Harrison would be the maitre d', whoopin' it up and serving Aquavit, aka Norwegian kerosene. Around midnight all the women, afraid to become pumpkins, left. Finally, the campus was silent for a few hours. We all felt like college kids again.

The youngest performer present was Heidi King from Indiana, one of our bass players. What a shame that some of our young adolescent students were not able to take part. Maybe some type of award from our accordion clubs would help some of our younger generation continue this tradition of playing in an accordion orchestra. Believe me, it is quite an experience. It is not what you imagine when you think of accordion music. It is unique.

At the concert Thursday evening at Angelico Hall, we saw several members of our Bay Area Clubs, which was gratifying. If you get a chance speak to them, I think they will give you glowing reviews. Hopefully, more of our members will attend next year to find inspiration. I know I did and I can hardly wait to return next summer.



Sharon & Gus Greyhosky & famous scooter! (Right) These 3 ladies blew everyone away with their playing: Lynn Ewing, Sharon Greyhosky, Marian Kelly



Camp Photo 2008

Word Has It . . .

- . . . That **Walt Woodall** took a fall and broke his hip. We're all pulling for him.
- . . . That **VAL HAS COTATI TICKETS** and will bring them to the Aug. 17 meeting. \$15 one day, \$25 two days, and the club gets \$2 for every ticket sold.
- . . . That **Sharon Walters Greyhosky** broke her foot just before Galla-Rini camp and bravely came to camp anyway. Ya gotta love that electric scooter!
- . . . That **the SF Accordion Band (Fun Band)** drew a great crowd at the Piccolo Pavilion in Corte Madera last Sunday—and we did a good job too!

What Else Is Going On?

Eighteenth Annual Cotati Accordion Festival Aug. 23 & 24, 2008; info@cotatifest.com; (707) 664-0444

SEE OR CONTACT VAL FOR TICKETS!!! (510) 531-4836 vtkacc@ifn.net

Saturday, Sept. 6 Int'l Buffet with The Internationals, Italian-American Club, SF; call (415) 585-8059 by Aug. 29

September 6-7: Festa Italia in Monterey, Custom House Plaza (more below)

Joe Smiell's Button Box Camp Sept. 14-20 Call Joe (510) 832-6938

Las Vegas International Accordion Convention Sept. 29-Oct. 2.

And . . . Make this one if you can!

Mike Marotta Jr. tells me they have a very special Festa Italia planned for September 6-7 at the Custom House Plaza in downtown Monterey (right in front of Fisherman's Wharf) and it's FREE! Now get this: Frank Marocco will be performing two times each day as a special guest performer in the Tony Galla band! Mike Marotta, Jr. will be playing too. This sounds terrific!



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When Do Our Fellow Accordion Clubs in the Bay Area (and slightly beyond) Meet?

Accordion Club of the Redwoods (ACR) regularly meets on the third Monday of the month, Hermann & Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue, Petaluma. Contact: Kris Nelson krisnelson@aol.com or (707) 795-4860.

Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS) meets on the first Sunday of the month, 1:30 p.m. at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue between Keily Blvd. and Stevens Creek Blvd. Contact: Bill Topogna (408) 984-5290.

Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC) has three chapters: The Vacaville club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30, at Creekside Bar & Grill, 555 Main street, Vacaville. The Humboldt Club meets on the third Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., Humboldt Swiss Club, 5403 Tompkins Hill Road, Loleta, CA 95551. The Sacramento group meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd., Sacramento. Contact for all the GSAC Chapters: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359.

Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC) meets on the second Wednesday of the month 7:00 p.m. in the Music Auditorium, Escalon High School, Escalon (just east of the Community Center). Contact: (209) 545-3603.

Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS) meets 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at Lutheran Church Hall, 6365 Douglas Blvd, off Highway 80 in Granite Bay, CA. Contact: Vince Cukar (916) 791-3041.



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- * Reno Di Bono South Bay ourhike@aol.com * William De Michelis South Bay wdd777@comcast.net
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- * Zighi Baci San Francisco (Sheri Mignano) www.zighibaci.com or e-mail zighi@sonic.net

SF Accordion Band Practice

Wed., July 9 and 23, 7 p.m. at Val Kieser's Home in Oakland
CALL AHEAD!! Please join us!
Info: call Frank Schlotter (510) 339-1163
or Val (510) 531-4836 vtkacc@ifn.net

Our Sincere Thanks

To those who generously donate to the Club.

Each year we start a new cumulative list of donors. If you donate and your name doesn't show up in this column, please call Val (510) 531-4836 or vtkacc@ifn.net and let me know. We want to be sure you are recognized! Thanks! These donations are very much appreciated. So far this year your Editor has learned of donations from Ray Abinanti, Leo Aquino, Thelma Bartoli (mem. Lou Soper), Lawrence Caserza, Peter Di Bono, Lynn Ewing, John Gullmes, Don Haga (mem. Lou Soper), Sue & Mike Hirigoyen, Val Kieser (2: mem. Lou Soper & Mem. Lee Woodall), Bruce Kirschner, Carley Koliha, Gwyn Lister (2), Herb Meier, James Manfredini, Frank Montoro, Sundi O'Mara, Vincent Rinaldi, Amil Samayoa (mem. Lou Soper), Michael Sanossian, Paul Thiel, Louis Traverso, Lore Warren (mem. Kevin McCarthy); Scott Williamson, Lee & Walt Woodall, Richard Yaus, Mark Zhagel (4)—and unnamed people who made cash donations at the April meeting

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AND FREE OF FOOD, PAPER PLATES,
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Members may place one small ad for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$6.00 per issue. A business-card-size ad costs \$6 per issue or \$60 per year for members; a quarter-page ad costs \$15.00 for members; a half-page ad costs \$25 for members. A full-page ad costs \$50.00 for members. Discount available for ongoing ads. Ads placed by non-members will cost twice the above-quoted prices. A flyer advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members.

NEXT MEETING:
Sunday, August 17, 2008
11:00—2:00 Oyster Point Yacht Club



**Newsletter of the
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