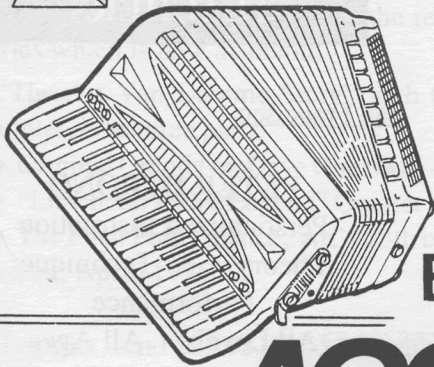


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB



APRIL, 1997

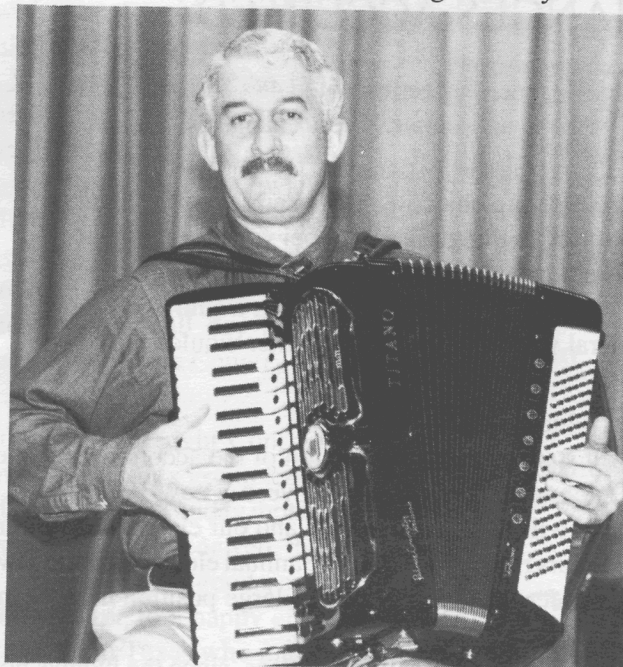
April General Meeting

by Richard Schiller

Dear Friends: If I named a song to describe our April meeting, it would have to be, "What A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening!" This meeting had everything – golden oldies, youth on parade, a recording artist, all the way to a mind boggling, note bending world class finale! Guest performers? No way! This program was comprised entirely of club members, and a surprise visit by a couple of artists who got to see BAAC talent at its best! So let's get started. The meeting was called to order by **Domenic Saso** and his little brass bell. A mighty task to gain the attention of such an exuberant group. **Bob Berta** welcomed us and recommended Henry Doktorski's new book, The Classical Accordion. **Marian Kelly** then took the stage to clarify any points in the proposed bylaws change we were voting on that evening. **Frank Montoro** spoke in support of the changes, and implored all members to become involved in the committees and events to make our club work better. **Lou Soper** and **Tom Cordoni** raised concerns that the bylaws had to be accepted as a package only and also that money authoriza-

tion was still not clearly under membership control. We then learned that the bylaws can be amended if needed in the future.

So, on to the music! Nothing like the golden gems of the past to get us in the right mood, and **Tony DiBono** led the charge onto the stage along with **Lee Woodall** and **Jim Firpo** to do just that! They had us singing along and clapping our hands to several great melodies, *Let Me Call You Sweetheart/ Somewhere My Love, Just Because/Too Fat Polka, and When You're Smiling/The Shiek Of Araby*. What a great way to start the evening. Thank you **Tony, Lee and Jim!**



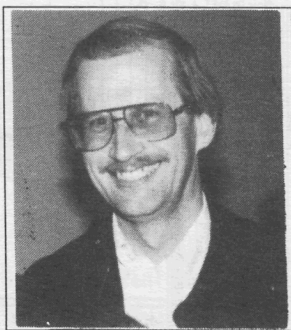
Ken Chambers

Now that we were all warmed up from the toe tapping and clapping, we were ready for our next performer. **Jan Schellenberger** is a young man who, as **Frank Montero** puts it, "just keeps getting better, and Better, and BETTER every time he plays for us." Is there any doubt that the future of the accordion is safe in this young man's hands! **Jan** dove right in with *Waltz Tropicale*, followed by *Aire on a G String* by Bach, a lovely counterpoint melody between keyboard and bass. His final of-

cont. p. 4

President's Message

by Bob Berta



The busy season is upon us. As you will see from our calendar in this issue there will be an abundance of accordion related events happening very soon. The Cotati Accordion Festival and our annual picnic are going to be exciting this year. And we will again make our presence known through participation in the big Making Waves event in San Francisco on Sat. June 21. Last year this event saw 25 stages set up the length of Market Street with 1200 musicians and around 70,000 people in attendance. If you are into folk music the big news is the grand opening of the Lark in the Morning

store at San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf May 17th and 18th. The BAAC will take to the stage on the 18th from noon to 1:00pm. Both of the days will see some of the finest folk musicians you have every heard playing an assortment of instruments...some of which you probably didn't know existed!

While all of these events are fun and exciting, there is as always a real need for people to assist in the various activities. Already Herb Meier is hard at work on the Cotati Accordion Festival plans and Lou Soper is planning the annual picnic. Both would love to hear from you if you can give them a hand.

The new club bylaws, approved at the last membership meeting, will give a much needed change in the structure of the club. In particular, the financial year and officers' terms will allow for a more reasonable change of the guard. The old system meant changing of officers in the middle of the most busy part of the year's activities which caused major problems.

We are also looking forward to the return of board member Bob Smith from Minnesota where he is attending a month long accordion repair and maintenance school. That sounds like an interesting way to spend your vacation!

BYLAWS CHANGES ACCEPTED

The members attending BAAC's April General Meeting voted 48 - 8 in favor of the changes to our bylaws proposed in the March newsletter. These changes go into effect immediately.

A few voices were heard from at the meeting objecting, not to any specific change, but rather to the idea that the vote was all-or-nothing. One member voiced unhappiness with the fact that the membership is not asked to approve expenditures. While his concern is worthy of discussion, the conclusion of such a discussion would not belong in bylaws, which provide only a general structural guide, but rather would be part of Board procedural rules.

Here are some of the main changes which you will notice:

- Greater emphasis on our non-profit status and the promotion of the accordion outside ourselves which this requires.
- Dues will not be payable until October 1st, since the fiscal year is now 10/1 to 9/30.
- For the same reasons, nominations will be held in August and our election in September, instead of May and June.
- Since the term of office is now two years rather than one, the annual election should always be for only half the total number of BAAC offices. Additionally, one officer and one director-at-large position have been eliminated, leaving a total of eight members of the Board of Directors rather than the previous ten.
- Many more of you will be asked to serve on formal committees, since the bylaws now require the formation of Finance, Program, Promotion, Administration, and Membership committees.

MK

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

April 30, May 7 & 21, June 4 & 18. BAAC Ensemble rehearsals at Moose Lodge Hall, 7535 Mission in Daly City. Call Joe, (510) 832-6938.

May 5th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting. It's **Ladies' Night!!** Only an occasional male allowed on the stage. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F., just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7 P.M.

May 10th, Sat. begins at 5P. Bavarian Festival (Trachtenfest). Alpine dance and costume folk festival features catered dinner and dancing from 5P to midnight. Dance Workshops, 5:30 to 6:30. \$14 at the door. Centennial Hall, 22292 Foothill Blvd., Hayward. For info, (510) 530-5229.

May 14th, Wed. (note change to second Wed.) BAAC Board Meeting 7:30 PM at Bob Berta's, 4 Park Manor Drive, Daly City. Guests welcome. Call Bob at (415) 756-8309 for directions.

May 17th & 18th. Grand opening of Lark in the Morning's brand new Cannery location. Val Kieser, Richard Yaus, and Bob Berta play on the 18th from noon to 1P.

May 19th, Mon. Ethnic Music Accordion Workshop, including Polka, Gypsy, Italian, Parisian, Swing & Original Yodel Waltz. Presented by Gordon Kohl. Sixth Avenue Inn, 2000 Sixth Ave., Seattle. Social Hour at 5; workshop 6 to 9P. Call Bonnie Birch (206) 622-4991.

May 23 - 25, Fontana Button Accordion Festival & Contest. (all accordion varieties welcome). Call (909) 793-4040.

May 28th & June 25th. BAAC Fun Band rehearsal. Moose Lodge Hall, 7535 Mission in Daly City.

June...whole month is National Accordion Awareness Month (NAAM). Play for your friends, your neighbors, parties, businesses.....anywhere!

June 7th, Sat. Golden State Accordion-Aires Spring Picnic. How about cheering on our sister club (Suisun/ Vacaville/ Fairfield) by attending their picnic? Lake Solano Park, 8685 Pleasants Valley Road, Winters. Seven dollars includes chicken or steak, beans, salad, bread. Beer/wine available. Call for info (707) 864-2359.

June 21st. Making Waves event in downtown San Francisco. See March newsletter for info if you wish to play.

June 29th, Sunday. BAAC Picnic, Lou Soper, chair. Lou is recruiting lots of help to make this picnic a big success, so don't wait for him to ask! We're back to the Palo Alto Elks Club this year, in response to popular demand.

June 29th, Sunday. "The Day of the Accordion." Being celebrated by the Northwest Accordion Society at the Seattle Center, Center House, Thomas St. & 2nd. Ave. Competitions for solos, duets, and ensembles....all ages invited. Featuring

Frank Marocco, Peter Soave, Ken Olendorf, Horace Lazzari, Murl Allen Sanders, and special guest Art Van Damme. Call Ken at (206)-640-9395. Marian also has info and application. Second performance day will be Monday, June 30th at Jazz Alley.

July 7-12, Kimberley Olde Time Accordion Competitions in Kimberley, British Columbia. Featuring Frankie Yankovic and Myron Floren. Call (250) 427-4547.

July 13-19 and Sep 14 - 20: Joe Smiell's Button Box Camp at Norden. Call (510) 832-6938 for info.

July 9 to 13th, American Accordionists' Association Festival, Sheraton City Center Hotel, Washington, D.C. Competitions in all categories and levels, massed band, concerts, banquet. Marian has app. Call (800) 526-7495 for special \$78 room rate.

July 17-20, Accordion Teachers' Guild 35th Annual Festival and Competition in Grand Rapids, MI. Orchestras, Workshops, and guest artist, Peter Soave. Call the chair, Trudy Dudley, for info at (319) 396-6443.

August 1, 2, 3, Fri, Sat, Sun. Rocky Mountain Accordion Celebration. The First Annual Accordion celebration in Philipsburg, Montana, a quaint historic mining town. Featuring **Bonnie Birch** and **Lindy Kao**. Sponsored by Five Valley Accordion Association. Call (406) 859-3450 for info. Or Marian has list of hotels and events.

August 3rd, Sunday. Accordion Club of the Redwoods PICNIC. Danish Club Picnic Grounds, near Kastania Ave and Hwy 101 in So. Petaluma. Time and price not defined. Doubtless, Steve Balich will cook, so phone him for more info (707) 874-3494.

August 4th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting featuring Jorgen Sundeqvist. Jorgen is also scheduled to play in Portland on July 25th, San Diego on August 10th, Seattle on August 11th, and Chicago on August 18th. Call Joe Petosa for details (206) 632-2700.

August 7-10th, Thurs-Sun. 4th Annual Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration, Leavenworth, WA. Competitions, parade, dancing, concerts, workshops. Call Anne Koenig at (509) 548-5807 or check the web at www.leavenworth.org.

August 23 & 24, Sat/Sun. Cotati Accordion Festival. This year's featured guest (both days) will be Dick Contino.

Sept. 8th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting featuring Vyatcheslav Semyonov (bayan) and his wife Natasha (domra), with Robert Sattler (bayan).

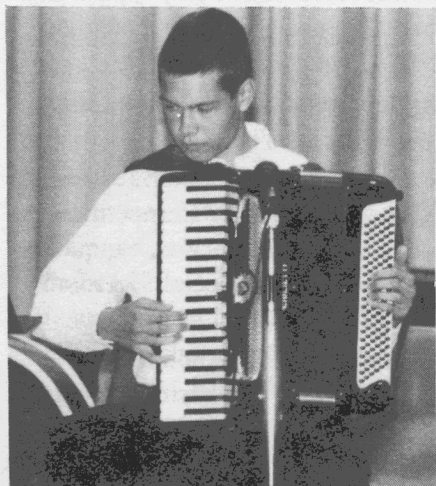
Please send Calendar Information to Your Editor, using the address on the last page. Thank you. -

April General Meeting, cont.

fering was a piece that I can only dream about playing, *Pietro's Return*. Played with conviction and dazzling bass runs it showed that in the not too distant future, **Jan** will take his place as a featured artist in the 2nd half of the program. **Jan** earned his usual rousing vote of approval, plus accolades from a surprise guest, the great **Peter**

Soave. And, most importantly, a three tinkle salute from **Domenic's** little brass bell! **Jan**, you've arrived!

After all that excitement, **Frank Montero** arrived on the scene to soothe us with wonderful music from his Elka MIDI. I was instantly transported to a south sea island at sunset



Jan Schellenberger

upon hearing these fine arrangements and electronic orchestration. Listen to these titles: *You Belong To My Heart*; *Por Fin Toros*; *There'll Never Be Another You*; *Paso Doble*; and from *Evita*, *I'd Be Suprisingly Good For You*. Frank gets so many sound variations from his instrument, it's not hard to understand why he's in demand as a dance band! I especially liked the way he kept the accordion sound throughout the numbers. Hmm, I always considered myself a reed man, but maybe..... **Frank** also announced the performance of our Chamber Ensemble on April 20th. Another group we should wholeheartedly support. Thanks **Frank!**

Next, club recording artist **Bob Delgado** paid tribute to **Charles Magnante** with three classic accordion gems: *Song Of Naples*, *Dark Eyes*, and *Waltz Allegro*. Hey, I didn't know you play *Allegro* that fast! Great stuff. **Bob** plays with great feeling and his Melodioso is a rich, fine sounding instrument that makes his offerings all the more enjoyable. **Bob** then accomplished a club first! He played a duet with himself, playing his own arrangement of Pietro Diero's *Beautiful Day*, a beautiful piece with musette sound. One melody prerecorded and played back on cassette as he played the 2nd part live. This piece was so melodic and beautiful that I turned around fully expecting to see **Ed Massolo**, our resident dance master and his wife **Isabel**, come dancing down the center isle! A very pleasing performance. Thank you **Bob**. What a night, and much more to come!

Just before break **Marian** did the honors by introducing two unexpected guests. Claudio Vena of the famed Quartetto Gelatto, who had performed the previous two days at Herbst Theater in the Civic Center and at Villa Montalvo in Saratoga. Quartetto Gelato is a group of four young

Toronto musicians who have "arrived", as it were, and have become very popular. Claudio, who arranges for the group, also plays



Frank Montero



Jim Firpo, Lee Woodall, Tony DiBono



Bob Delgado

April General Meeting, cont.

viola. In addition, we were honored to have the great chromatic artist **Peter Soave** with us. **Peter** had been invited by the group Composers, Inc. and would perform an award-winning work for solo accordion the following evening in the Veterans' Building Green Room (see February newsletter). **Peter** let us hear a sample of his soon-to-be-released CD played on a borrowed boom box.

Now, back to music. First up in the second half of the program, **Don Nurisso** with his big chords and friend **Lloyd Hermans** with the mellowest of clarinets (from the Calgary Symphony), treated us to a variety of selections. *Stranger On The Shore*, (can you hear that mellow clarinet?), *Everything I Have Is Yours* combined with *The Eyes Of Love*, done in bolero tempo, and finishing with *Weaver Of Dreams*. The neat thing about these two artists is the way their adlibbing styles play off one another creating a tapestry of interwoven riffs, melodies and chords without rhythm backup! Great sounds and technique. Boy are we getting a musical education to-



Bart Benico

night, and our next artist drove the mood to yet another "high".

Bart Benico, whom we've missed seeing recently, brought his two Giuliettis on stage and

with his parents **John and Mary Benico** cheering him on from the audience, wowed us with his expertise! **Bart** apologized at the start for being rusty. My only thought was, "Oh if only I could achieve such a level of rustiness!" **Bart** wafted through *The Breeze And I* from *Andalucia Suite*, and then had us humming along with the very beautiful *Gittara Romano*. Then, for his feature presentation **Bart** strapped on another beautiful Giulietti, a gift from his parents when he was a young budding artist, to play the challenging number, *The Peanut Vendor*. It's not just that **Bart** plays these pieces flawlessly and with such "gusto", but watching him enjoy his music so much as he plays really adds to the musical enjoyment of the audience. Not unexpectedly an encore was asked for and **Bart** graciously responded with a fine rendition of Joplin's *A Strenuous Life*. A great performance. Our thanks to his parents **Mary and John** for giving the accordion community such a great representative!

And now on to the final performer of the evening. **Ken Chambers** was with us last year with a stellar performance complete with printed program, and earlier this year came out of the audience cold to play a duet with famed chromatic artist **Viekko Ahvenainen**. Is there anyone out there that can deny that this former California State Accordion champion is aptly described as "World Class"? And he is Ours! Tonight **Ken** played for us his arrangement of the entire works of Gershwin's *Rhapsody In Blue*. A piece 15 or so minutes in length that opened and closed with an incredible note bending sound which emulated the clarinet traditionally used in the orchestration. I can't really describe in words the quality of this performance. As a hushed audience watched, the Master weaved his way through this ultra complicated piece with perfect bellows control, lightning fast keyboard length arpeggios, octave melodies, fast switching, thunderous bellow shakes and dynamic control that erupted near the end in a of grand chorus that just gave us "shivers". All I can say is that you had to be there for this was very special. When **Ken** finished I don't think I've ever seen an audience leap to its feet so quickly to salute with a standing ovation. **Ken Chambers** is in a league of very few performers and we are so fortunate to have him with us. We need to hear him more often!

And so there you have it. It was a very lovely way to spend an evening in April. Our thanks to all the fine performers who participated. Man do we have something going with our club or what? And now on to May!!!



Don Nurisso, Lloyd Hermans

April Board Meeting

Synopsis

- Our Treasurer reports monies in our three accounts totaling \$8,136.
- We will use written ballots to vote on the bylaws changes at our April meeting, to be certain we are counting only members' votes.
- Report on the workshop survey taken at our March meeting: Of 48 surveys received, 9 wanted no workshop or wanted other subjects; 38 would like a repair/maintenance workshop, and 29 would like to have one on stage fright. Three fourths of the respondents wanted to have the workshop on meeting nights, either before or after, perhaps intruding a little into the meeting time.
- Peter Di Bono has tendered his resignation from the Board, effective immediately.
- Through the efforts of Lou Soper with help from Frank Montoro, we have found a rehearsal spot for the BAAC Ensemble and the BAAC Band...the Moose Lodge in Daly City. A motion that BAAC should pay the \$35 rental fee for both groups through the end of June passed unanimously.

Holding Your Accordion for Optimum Performance Capability

by Gary Dahl

The accordion, because of its vertical keyboard, requires correct body placement for maximum technical capability. When you are seated, the bottom section of the keyboard *should not be inside your right leg*. This blocks the bottom section of the keyboard at an inward angle forcing the hand position to be twisted.

The photo on a Charles Magnante arrangement provides the best visual example of correct keyboard placement. The keyboard should be parallel with the center line of the body, which will allow a proper angle for the hand position. To accomplish this, the straps should be tightly adjusted preventing the accordion from moving side to side upon reversal of the bellows direction. The keyboard is only a few inches below the chin, black keys directly in line under the chin and vertical with the center line of the body. When the keyboard is correctly aligned, the technical aspects of fingering, such as the crossing of the 4th finger over the thumb from C to Bb can be executed with confidence and accuracy. This positioning is ideal for both standing or sitting and will present a professional confident appearance and performance.

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Accordions and Fellowship in Plano, Texas

by Gwyn Lister

The Texas Accordion Association's Annual Convention opened on March 14th in Plano, Texas (near Dallas) at the Holiday Inn. I believe there were about 100 in attendance and many more at the Saturday night concert.

The two days were filled with Band practice under the direction of Joan Cochran Sommers from the University of Missouri — Kansas City. Joan's energy and humor took a mixed group of players through about four hours of practice and on to the Saturday night concert. We performed such selections as *Marchetriumphale*, *Grandfather's Clock*, Joplin's *Ragtime Dance*, von Weber's *Sonatina*, and other numbers.

There were many workshops offered: Joan's sight reading techniques and her Master's Workshops which anyone could watch and learn from; Gordon Kohl presenting Maximizing the Capabilities of Both Keyboards; Dale Wise speaking to Accordion Repair and Surviving Without an Accordion Instructor; and Jane Christison discussing Accordion Presentation Techniques and Operating an Entertainment Business. Larry Jurak held a workshop on Jazz Chords; Jim Wadowick had the Composer's Forum, and Mike Borelli taught us how to Jam. Jim Rommel spoke to Embellishing Techniques and a Composers' Contest was held at noon on Saturday. There was something going on in four different rooms all day long; people were there from many different parts of the Country — about six from California.

The Ballroom was packed for the Saturday night Concert which was followed by a performance of Joan's group from the University and several talented individuals. Sunday morning goodbyes were said — friendships had been renewed, the accordion enjoyed by all, vendors packed up their goods, and another Texas Accordion Convention came to a happy end. My personal thanks to all of the folks from Texas who make these two and a half days possible — it was great!!

March 10, 1997

Dear Editor;

I've visited the BAAC only once but thought it was really a wonderful group. The Cotati Festival is one of my favorites, and although I am now alone after 35 years of marriage, I will still attend this wonderful event. I always enjoy reading the publication that you put out as I know some of the people in the stories from folk dancing.

I've cut out some things to show you how heightened the awareness in the accordion as an entertainment medium has become. You're all doing the things that are causing the love of the accordion to return to the public's affections, I believe. Well, anyway, at least to mine!!

You're a precious group, and I just thought I'd tell you that, from an outsider's perspective, that quality is truly visible.

Sincerely,

Carol Stollory

P.S. Carol is not a member, nor do I find her name or address in any past records. Nice to know that we have a broad and positive reach!

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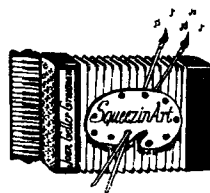
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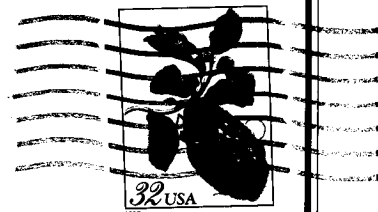
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