

Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB

January, 1995 General Meeting

by Bob Berta

Remember when the classic beginning of a mystery novel started with "It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly...". The January meeting certainly brought that thought to mind. After several days of rain we were greeted with...what else...more rain.

Luckily that didn't seem to drown or even dampen the enthusiasm of the 91 members who fought the storm to attend the first meeting of 1995. The members were treated to a great blend of various styles of both accordions and music. Prior to the actual meeting **Frank Montoro** covered the few business details quickly (summarized in the Board Meeting report on page 2) and moved to the entertainment portion of the program. There were a few no-shows...perhaps due to the terrible weather...but several last minute "volunteers" filled in to provide plenty of great entertainment.

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Veikko Concert

It's not really clear why someone would want to miss a concert by our friend and virtuoso accordionist Veikko Ahvenainen. Maybe, like me, you have a bazillion Veikko tapes, play them all the time and figure that covers it. Or, maybe you figure with another afternoon's practice, you might just bring your playing up to Veikko's level, so better stay home that day.

Don't even think it! Now is the time for all good BAAC members to show what they're made of. Support a great accordionist, BAAC and the accordion by occupying a seat at Mercy High School on Sunday afternoon the 5th of March. And bring someone with you. They will go home with a whole new perspective of the accordion's capability.

You don't spit in the wind, you don't step on Superman's cape and you don't miss a Veikko concert!! Oh yes, by the way, p.s. and all that....the **San Francisco Accordion Ensemble** will be there, too, playing a few numbers by themselves and several along with our Finnish friend.

D.H.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 1st, Wednesday. BAAC Board Meeting, 7:30 PM. Ed Massolo's. 612 Lassen St., So. S.F.

February 6th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting, 7:00 PM. Featuring Jim Ragel with Marvin Thompson on clarinet, Jim Firpo & Leon Broussal, Bart Beninco, Tony Di Bono, Arnie Krenn and Reno Di Bono. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus San Francisco.

February 8th, Wednesday. BAAC Accordion Practice, 7:00 PM. House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938.

February 13th, Monday. Fun Band Practice, 7:00 PM. House of Parties. Call Domenic, 415-587-7557.

February 22nd, Wednesday. BAAC Accordion Practice, 7:00 PM. House of Parties.

March 5th, 1995, Sunday afternoon. Veikko Ahvenainen concert, Mercy High School, 19th Ave. across from Stonestown Shopping Center, San Francisco. Admission, \$10.

March 18th, 1995, Saturday. Texas Accordion Association Convention (Dallas). Call Norman Seaton, 214-270-3791.

President's Message

We need to make a decision about the location of our annual picnic site at this time. Your Executive Board will be discussing the matter at our next meeting on February 1st and we hope to bring our recommendation to the membership at the February general meeting on Monday, February 6th.

As you may know, the Palo Alto Elks' Club has raised the rental fee for their picnic grounds from \$1000 to \$1500. This means for us that, if we charge \$5/person admission, we will lose money on the picnic without 325 paid admissions (since we have other picnic-associated expenses). Even if we decide to charge more per person, it is clear that the picnic will no longer have the potential of being a fund raiser for BAAC and may well show a loss.

We are considering changing our location to the Swiss Park in Newark. The rent is only \$400 and it has other attractive features. Several of us have visited Swiss Park recently and we will share with you at the February meeting what we have learned.

At this point the decision will simply be whether the picnic location will be Palo Alto Elks' or the Swiss Park in Newark. If you have an alternate suggestion which you wish to propose on February 6th, please research it first and be prepared to provide at that meeting specific information concerning cost, parking, availability, picnic tables, barbecue pits, shade, stage, electricity, restroom facilities, playground, and chairs. We will not be able to entertain other suggestions made without these specifics.

In addition to this decision, we need to recruit a committee to work on such things as a raffle, door prizes, program, and other such non-details. See you on Monday, Feb. 6th.

Frank Montoro

January Board Meeting

Synopsis

The meeting agenda was read and approved as were the Minutes of the December Board Meeting.

- The Treasurer reported \$3,567.75 in checking and \$3,892.88 in savings, of which \$1,272.97 is for the Performance Fund.
- The Board established April 1st as the deadline for entries in the Logo Contest.
- We will contact Myron Floren in March to pursue specific dates for the Floren Concert. Frank Schlotter, Grant Groberg, Bob Berta and Denny Huff will assist with concert organization. (Editor's note. Volunteers welcome - especially if you have any good ideas on promotion.)
- The Veikko Concert will be at Mercy High School on 5 March. Cost is \$10 per person.
- Joe Smiell will check out the suitability of Swiss Park for the BAAC picnic.
- The Board discussed sending exchange players to the Seattle Club this Spring.
- Anchorage Shopping Center apparently did mail check for the Strollers at the Festival, but it isn't clear where it was sent. The Board will investigate.
- The idea of an "Accordion Show Case" was moved to 1996 due to the activities already planned for this year. In a related discussion, Joe Smiell volunteered to do a Button Box Presentation/Discussion for the Folk Music Society's Annual Show.
- AFNA, the Accordion Federation of North America, has extended BAAC an invitation to its 40th Anniversary Celebration in Los Angeles, 16-21 August.
- The Board will select a Nominating Committee in April in anticipation of the next BAAC elections to be held in June.

D.H.

**American Accordionists'
Association's
Accordion Festival
Houston, TX
7-12 July 1995**

Provided by *Faith Deffner*

The American Accordionists' Association has selected Houston, Texas to host its 1995 Accordion Festival. The Festival will run from the 7th to the 12th of July and will feature a testimonial dinner honoring accordion great, Bill Palmer, with a special tribute to the memory of his colleague, partner and friend of 40 years, Bill Hughes. The famous duo of Palmer-Hughes created the world's most successful and complete accordion course. Their course guided generations of accordion students since 1952, while enjoying sales exceeding 10 million copies. These two men represent a lifetime of accordion achievements which ran a parallel course with accordion history. Together, they perfected and extended the parameters of concert accordion work well beyond the limits of their day.

The Festival will feature the Saturday, July 8 testimonial dinner, but the weekend will be filled with related events. Some of the scheduled events include national competitions for students, hobbyists, and club members, massed band mini-concerts, several "Club-Pub" gatherings (where club members may jam together), workshops, and many performance opportunities.

A number of accordion dignitaries and famed performers will attend and participate in the tribute concert hon-

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oring the prolific work of Palmer and Hughes. New accordion works will be premiered and old favorites will be savored once again. This testimonial weekend provides a rare opportunity to share some intimate reflections of the dreams, untiring efforts and amazing accomplishments of Bill Palmer and his colleague.

A number of innovations are planned for the festival. These include a new category— *Competition of the Clubs*, which extends a welcome to, and provides a performance stage for, members of accordion clubs from all over the U.S. Accordion concerts and events are planned throughout the city during the festival. An *Accordion Day in*

Galveston has been proposed as another unique event for the participants. Houston, our fourth largest city, offers many exciting tourist attractions such as Six Flags, Astroworld, Spacecraft Center, etc.

The Event will take place at the JW Marriott Hotel on Westheimer. Special room rate for AAA participants is \$69/room/nite (single, double, or quad). Since rooms at this rate are limited, call early to reserve (1-800-231-6058). Banquet cost will be \$32.50; Tribute concert on the 7th will be \$10/ticket.

Six hundred persons are expected; plan to attend this important accordion event! More details will follow.

January General Meeting, cont.

Ed Massolo, our MC for the evening, introduced **Joe Nanut**, who



Joe Nanut

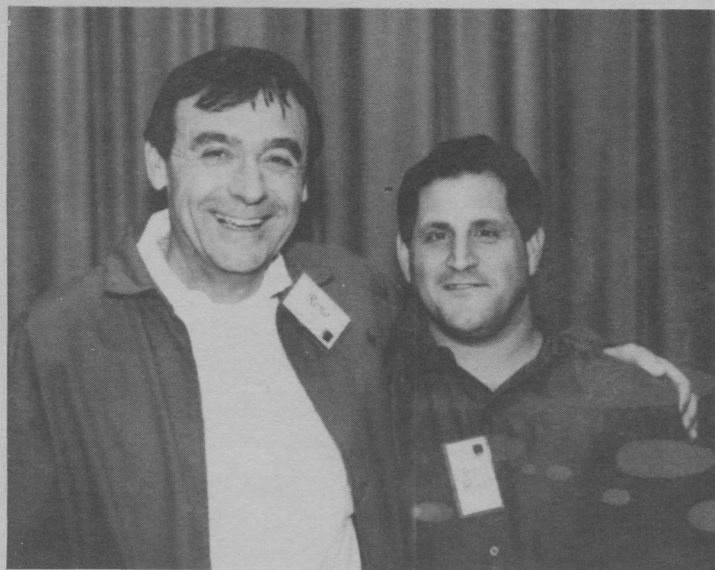
had brought his button box. Joe got everyone's blood warmed up by playing a gorgeous selection of Austrian tunes. He played *Bayern Kirmess*, *Alpine Polka* and *Waltz for April*. He thanked our illustrious button box maestro, **Joe Smiell**, for the fine button box camps that Joe conducts and also for the music that he composes and arranges. **Joe Nanut** also started a neat feature which all the musicians picked up on during the night. He took the time to talk about the music he plays, why he does it and where his personal interests are musically. Sev-

eral members remarked later that this was a good way to get to know the performer as well as other forms of accordions and music.

The next performer was a surprise...not to the audience...but to the performer! Since we had need of a replacement for a no show, **Reno DiBono** was asked to come up on a moment's notice. The fact that Reno could come up, grab another musician's piano accordion, think of a few tunes to play and perform them without warming up certainly speaks well for his fine ability. He played fine arrangements of *Romanga Mia*, *Charade* and *Granada*. I guess not knowing that you are going to be playing is one way of

avoiding the jitters before your performance!

Rob Campanella brought his dia-



Reno Di Bono, Rob Campanella

tonic accordion up for a selection of European tunes. His selection of *La*



Frank Panacci

Montmartroise (French), *Juntusrannan Muistoja* (Finish), *Lukkari-Heikin Polka* (Finish) and *Torna A Surriento* (Italian) were perfect compliments to the characteristics of his diatonic accordion. Rob is a convert from the piano accordion to the button accordion. Everytime he performs he illustrates the giant steps he is taking in becoming at ease with his new found love.

A perennial favorite of the club, **Frank Panacci**, brought his wonderful **BIG** Colombo (140 bass, extended keyboard, dual tone chambers) up for a dazzling expositor of skill. The tones

Jan. General Meeting, cont.

he coaxes from that accordion never cease to amaze me. He played his own arrangements of *Valentino's Tango* and *Italian Aire*. He continued with Magnante arrangements of *Tea for Two* and *Dark Eyes*. When I hear Frank play I am tempted to go home and burn my own accordions.

A short intermission gave everyone a chance to move around a bit to warm up and celebrate the new year over a cup of hot coffee.

Val Keiser tok the stage next as another substitute performer. She played a series of Landlers (Waltzes) written by Joe Smiell. She also took the time to talk about her fascination with the button box and to thank Joe for all the encouragement she gets from him. Val is also a very fine piano accordionist. She seemed quite comfortable with both instruments and plays with a lot

of emotion.

President **Frank Montoro** started out his portion of the program with a



Frank Montoro

description of the electronic/MIDI accordion he plays. He said that it is just another variation on the many variations of accordions. He utilized his program to illustrate how one chooses sounds to fit the particular tune to be played. Frank uses a sound module that provides accompaniment and percussion along with the instrument sounds. He plays professionally for dinners, dances, etc. and finds that his MIDI setup allows him to create music perfectly suited to what his customers want. He illustrated his points with a selection of dance tunes which included *Green*

Dolphin Street, Begin the Beguine, Ain't She Sweet, Charleston, Fiesta and Caminito.

Piano accordionist **Bob Delgado** was last on the night's program with a selection of tunes designed to satisfy just about any taste. He played a medley of *Sharpshooters* and *Washington Post Marches*, *Pretty Baby*, a medley of *Lonely Lane* and *Ain't Misbehavin*, *Tango of Roses*, *Beautiful Days*, *Tic Toc Polka* and his own composition, *Tyrolian Echoes Part II*.

If you need an idea for a New Year's resolution you might consider volunteering to play at an upcoming meeting. We are always looking for volunteers. Don't be afraid to volunteer if you are a little rusty or feel that you aren't as advanced as some of the other members. There is nothing like an appreciative audience to make you feel great!



Val Keiser



Bob Delgado

Accordion Sales and Repair by Gordon Piatanesi

Now that Colombo and Sons Accordion Company is no longer available for assistance, lots of us are asking, "Where do we go to repair our accordions?" Gordon is still out there thinking about us, and he has provided the following list for our assistance. Keep it for further reference.

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"Nothing in this world can take the place of *persistence*. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. *Persistence* and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."

Calvin Coolidge.

Other Accordion Clubs Welcome You to Their Meetings!!

You are invited and encouraged to attend other accordion clubs' general meetings at any time (consider how much our guests have enhanced BAAC's meetings!). Here are regular meeting schedules for a few clubs:

Portland Accordion Club meets the **first Saturday** of each month from 1 to 5 PM at the **Eagles Lodge, SE 50th & Hawthorne, Portland, OR.** Call 503-246-2124 for further info.

Northwest Accordion Club meets the **second Monday** of the month from 7 to 10 PM at the **European Connection, 717 SW 148th St., Burien, WA.** Call for a reservation 206-783-3593

The **San Diego club, ALSI** (Accordion Lovers' Society International), meets the **second Sunday** of the month at **Calvary Lutheran Church, 3060 54th St., San Diego.** Call 619-226-6071 for more info.

The **Chicago Accordion Club** meets the **third Monday** of the month at **Elmhurst American Legion, 310 W. Butterfield Rd. Elmhurst, IL.** For more info, call 708-833-7800.

The **Texas Accordion Association (Dallas)** meets the **first Tuesday** of each month at **Wyatt's Cafeteria, LBJ (Loop 635) at Ferguson/Centerville.** Call 214-270-3791 for more info.

Nick Ariondo

by Alice Hall, FOTA President, reprinted with permission from *The Bellows*, Sept/Oct 1994

Nick Ariondo is a Southern Californian accordion player whom I have never heard, but about whom I have read quite a bit. We have been wanting to profile him in the newsletter for some time, and Alice Hall has collaborated to make this "the time." Nick recently did a stellar performance with the Brentwood Symphony Orchestra and Alice sent us the following article. Thanks Alice! When can Nick play for a BAAC meeting??

D.H.

The Outlook, a Los Angeles-based newspaper review read as follows: **"Accordion strikes notes of surprise during symphony opener!"**.

The Outlook then went on to say: "Nick Ariondo...considered a one-person crusade against those who would relegate the 'accordion' to the archives of quaint folk instruments. His performance with the symphony of the 'Accordion Concerto in G Minor', a work he wrote with the late Edward Hasharian, took the listener on a consciousness-raising trek into the sonic possibilities of this much maligned instrument. The music began very forceful in the first movement, with strong neo-romantic elements...the remaining movement and the orchestra/audience ovation was well-deserved (and ecstatic!)"

The above quotes were witnessed backstage after Nick Ariondo's brilliant performance of his Accordion Concerto in G minor co-composed with Ed Hosharian.

"I never imagined this instrument sounding so magnificent with a symphony orchestra. I was completely mesmerized!"

Your performance with the orchestra was electrifying!"

"I must congratulate you for an incredible musical experience that I never thought possible on an accordion. You and your instrument were marvelous!"

"This accordion concerto needs to be heard with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and other major orchestras around the world."

"Mr. Ariondo, you have convinced me, I now truly appreciate this marvelous instrument in your precious hands!"

This was an experience of a lifetime for those of us who had the opportunity to attend the October 16th concert featuring Nick Ariondo with the Brentwood Symphony Orchestra, Alvin Mills, conductor, Gevork Gyulatyán, concert pianist.

The Concert Hall, filled with listeners of all ages, were in for a surprise! Yes, indeed...and a surprise never to be forgotten! With the orchestra present and anxiously awaiting, Nick came on stage with pianist Gevork Gyulatyán. Mr. Gyulatyán, a brilliant pianist, accompanied Nick Ariondo during the first movement of the concerto.

The orchestra then joined in for a lovely second movement and a powerful closing third movement titled

"Danza Viva." To say the very least, this was a thrilling moment for every one of us! The wonderful combination of strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion and piano, along with the accordion, proved to all of us the importance of the accordion in being presented in this type of setting so seldom heard. But Nick Ariondo seems to be changing all that, as he continues showcasing the accordion in sol concert recitals, with chamber music groups and with symphony orchestras (his next symphony concert is in November with the Desert Symphony of Palm Springs).

The reaction of the audience was tremendous. Nick received a standing ovation and three curtain calls with thunderous applause at the end of his riveting performance.

It was so very interesting to watch the expression on people's faces who have never heard or seen an accordion with a symphony orchestra. From the very first note to the very end, Nick proved to the audience at hand that an accordion concerto with symphony orchestra is definitely a winning combination! I myself could not believe this wonderful blend of virtuosic display and musicianship! Wow!!

Editor's Note: Nick Ariondo has quite a selection of Cassettes and Videotapes available for purchase. Some titles are FOTA Concert Video, The Artistry of Nick Ariondo, Accordion Concerto in G Minor (all videotapes) and The Nick Ariondo Chamber Ensemble and The Artistry of Nick Ariondo (both cassettes). For further info/orders, write or fax ACCO-MUSIC PUBLISHING, P O Box 11120, Glendale, CA 91206. Or Fax 213-550-1060.

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7:00 PM

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