

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO

BAY AREA ACCORDION CLUB

Editors: Marian Kelly
Dominic Palmisano

JUNE GENERAL MEETING

Seems like both attendance and enthusiasm at our meetings just keep growing. We had a full house on June 1st, with more than a hundred members and friends in attendance, and many people standing in the back.

Frank Montoro talked a bit about the library, and pleaded for the return of missing items. Please, folks, we want you to use the library, but we need to know who has the music. Don't forget to sign up for whatever you take.

Walter Traverso detailed some of the nicer donations to our rapidly upcoming picnic, asked for some last minute assistance, and urged everyone to be there.

And now for the music. We all settled in. **Domenic Saso** introduced **Dan Cooper**, our favorite troubadour, who claimed not to be in good voice, then disproved all that with delightful vocal and instrumental renditions of "Just a Gigolo" and "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries."

Lee Woodall, **John Firpo**, **Tony Di Bono**, and **Vince Cirelli**, along with **Rick Ellendorf** on the tuba were next. This esteemed ensemble delighted everyone with fantastic renditions of "Picnic Waltz," "Echoes of Vienna," "Amor, Amor, Amor," and "El Serio." More on them below.

Then we heard from **Bob Smith**, who wowed everybody with "Dark Eyes," "La Cumparsita," and "Return to Sorrento." If we had a prize for the most improved performer of the year, **Bob** would win hands down. His impressive interpretations were not only

musically accurate but obviously came from his heart. **Bob** has confided that he entered a talent competition sponsored by the City of Palo Alto and walked away with second prize!!

Reno Di Bono came forward and delighted us all with "St Louis Blues," an operatic aria the name of which we missed, and "Luna Mezzo al Mare" which he also sang in both Italian and English. Thank you, **Reno**. You are an entertainer extraordinaire!

After that, **Lee**, **John**, **Tony**, **Vince**, and **Rick** returned to the stage. This time they played "Beer Barrel Polka," "Occhi Neri," "La Cumparsita," and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." The audience really got into it, and soon this fearless foursome began to grow. We watched **Reno**, then brother **Peter Di Bono**, **Val Ballerini**, and **Reno Pucci** come forward, then later **Jerry Kramer** and **Bob Smith**. The audience sang along when they could and the evening

fast became a happening, an Event. **Vince** has provided your editors with copies of three of the group's numbers, one of which, "Amor, Amor, Amor," is being circulated as part of this newsletter. It would be great if every one of us could participate in the next happening, which, we promise, will occur soon. So, please practice these crowd pleasing numbers, folks, and watch for an announcement of the next Event.

Reno Pucci presented to **Lou Soper** a plaque commemorating his two-year presidency of our club, and **Lou**, clearly touched, spent a little time reminiscing about the beginnings of the club. (See the Conductor's Column for his thoughts.)

A lovely, warm hearted meeting. Many people stayed to chat or to play some more; others adjourned to Lyons down the road for more intensive schmoozing.

Carol Benetti



BAAC BOARD MEETING May 20, 1992

Synopsis of Minutes

- Library items are being taken but not signed for. Who has them??
- The Treasurer reports \$3345 in checking and \$1181 in savings.
- The incoming Treasurer will audit the books and a financial report will appear in the July newsletter.
- The upcoming picnic was discussed at length. Walter is handling everything beautifully, from all appearances.
- Still no action on t-shirts. Marian Kelly agreed to bring several possible designs to the next board meeting, so we can order shirts for the Cotati Festival.
- BAAC will sponsor a concert featuring the San Francisco Accordion Ensemble in the fall (update: on Sun. Sept. 27th. in Millbrae) A committee of three will find an appropriate site.
- BAAC will rent booth space at the Cotati Festival and will use it to sell accordion tapes featuring a wide variety of musical styles and performers.

Cotati Festival Happenings

It's coming up fast -- the Second Annual Cotati Accordion Festival on August 29th and 30th. Clifton Buck-Kauffman and Jim Boggio, the brains behind this delightful event, predict a larger crowd than last year, with terrific entertainers, a better sound system, a new main stage, more vendors, especially food vendors, and unbeatable positive publicity for the accordion.

Festivities begin at 11 A.M. both days and end around 7 P.M. The format will be similar to last year's in that it will, for the most part, alternate groups and soloists on the two stages, and it will include a mass Lady of Spain rendition around 3:30 in which all of you are invited to participate.

The program is still highly tentative, as Jim Boggio is still wheeling and dealing with possible performers, so the following list is only a guide. However, given that caveat, the Saturday program will include Motor Dude Zydeco, Steve Balich, Those Damn Accordions!, Michelle Gallandre, Romanov Salon Orchestra, Ken Olendorf, Marian Kelly, Gypsy Jazzers, and Art Van Damme. Sunday's program begins with Joe Smiell, then Peter Di Bono, Stas Wisniach, You-

Know-Who and the Sonoma Swamp Dogs, the San Francisco Accordion Ensemble, T.D.A!, Salut Matelot, Frank Morocco and Tommy Gumina. Pretty impressive, don't you agree???

Here is statistical information on some of the motels in the Cotati area. They are listed in decreasing order of desirability from my own point of view, considering appearance, general impression, cost, and proximity to 101, which is noisy at night. I did not inspect any rooms. SWB means "single with bath"; DWB, "double with bath" (not necessarily double bed(s)).

Quality Inn 5100 Montero Way Petaluma 94954 (at Penngrove exit 3 mi so. of Cotati) 707-664-1155 800-221-2222 SWB \$64-79 DWB \$74-89 Free Continental Bkfst, pool/spa/sauna, refrigerators in rooms, ESPN. Architecturally attractive, grey buildings. Two nite minimum. CSAA and senior discounts.

Red Lion Hotel One Red Lion Drive, Rohnert Park 94928 707-584-lion 800-541-1111 SWB \$99 DWB \$114. Suites available. Spacious grounds, large lovely lobby. Quiet. Two restaurants, pool, spa, exercise room, golf course Just North of Cotati

El Rancho Tropicana Resort Hotel 2200 Santa Rosa Ave Santa Rosa 95407 (2 mi

south of S. R. 707-542-3655 800-248-4747 SWB \$50-65 DWB,TWB \$60-75 30 acres grounds coffee shop

Best Western Inn 6500 Redwood Dr, Rohnert Park 94928 707-584-7435 SWB \$42, DWB \$46. Pool, jacuzzi, cable TV. Several restaurants within one block. CSAA and senior discounts. Close to festival.

Golden Penny Inn 6288 Redwood Drive, Rohnert Park 94928 707-584-1005 SWB \$22, DWB \$26; 2 double beds for 2 to 4 people, \$30. Pool. Low budget, close to 101 and Cotati.

Good Nite Inn 5040 Redwood Drive, Rohnert Park 94928 707-584-8180 SWB \$32, DWB \$38 Cable. Free coffee. Low budget, close to 101 and Cotati. Sr. and festival discounts.

Motel 6 5135 Montero Way, Petaluma 94954 (at Penngrove Exit) 707-664-9090. SWB \$30: DWB \$36.

M. Kelly

Dear Members:
It's dues time again.
Send \$20.00 to Rusty Bartoli
222 Prague St. San Francisco 94112

CONDUCTOR'S COLUMN

This is the final month of my second one year term as president of the Bay Area Accordion Club. I would like to reminisce about the achievements and accomplishments we have experienced together during our first two years of existence.

Our first meeting at Woodlake Joe's restaurant in San Mateo was attended by approximately 30 accordion enthusiasts. In just two short years we have blossomed into a group numbering in excess of 200. All I can say is -- WOW!! It is so rewarding to know that once a month we can meet and hear so many talented musicians playing such a great variety of music and perform at all levels of achievement. Where else could you go to hear such wonderful music for the price of one buck? This accordion club could be nicknamed "The Bargain Entertain-

ment Club of the Month."

Yes indeed -- we have brought the accordion back into the limelight with the many projects in which we have participated. We've played at festivals, parks, shopping malls, cable cars and yes, even airports and airplanes. Through this club, we have reestablished more pride, dignity and respectability for our beloved accordion.

The most important part for me has been the acquisition of so many new and wonderful accordion loving friends. Friends that will now last the remainder of my lifetime. I have been immensely honored to serve you as President. It is an honor that I shall cherish for the rest of my life. You have given me so much and I am very proud to give you a great big hug. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Lou Soper

SAILING, SAILING...

Bob Smith has sent us a copy of the May Newsletter of the Norcal Theater Organ Society, highlighting a passage about well-known Bay Area organist Larry Vannucci as follows:...."two national treasures almost ended up at the bottom of San Francisco Bay. Larry Vannucci almost fell overboard with his 55 year old Colombo & Son accordion on an April 18th outing of the "Sons of the Shake" Larry, who is an honorary member, met the group for breakfast at 5 AM. and the 35-40 members started their trip under both bridges about 9:30 A.M. High winds contributed to rough water which almost put Larry and the instrument, which was custom-made for him by the San Francisco accordion maker, overboard."

Tony and Dolly Galla-Rini

You may have noticed at our picnic that we were doubly honored this year. We not only had Anthony Galla-Rini as our guest, but also his delightful wife Dolly. For a while we doubted that she would be able to come, because she was concerned that (in her words) she would be in the way. Fortunately for us, Marian turned on her persuasive powers and the wonderful lady changed her mind. Thank goodness. Dolly won Marian over within a few seconds of her arrival by looking up with a wide and somewhat mischievous grin and saying "Hi, Kelly!" very enthusiastically. (After that, if anybody was in the way, it was probably Marian. Ed.) Anthony (Tony to us) and Dolly, ages 88 and 90 respectively, were a delightful couple and an inspiration to all of us who had the good fortune to be with them for a part of the three days they spent at the Kelly home. Their warmth and good humor were a part of each greeting as they saw old friends and made many new ones.

Dolly grew up on a farm near Salt Lake City with her parents and eleven brothers and sisters. She first met Tony through two of her brothers who were musicians in the L.A. area. It was years later, in 1971 when they married, the second marriage for both, and they now live in San Marcos, CA, a bit north of San Diego.

Tony, a native of Manchester, CT, spent his early years on the East Coast on the vaudeville circuit touring with his musical family. He went on his own in 1924. His vaudeville years, 1911 to 1932, were among the most colorful and chal-

lenging of his career. He met everybody who was anybody in show business. He loves to reminisce about his experiences with two other famous accordionists, Pietro and Guido Diero.

He came to San Francisco in 1932 and set up a very successful music studio. I recall hearing Tony in concert when I was eleven years old. Until then I didn't know that the left hand did more than play "oom, pah, pah." Even then, Tony had made a study of the accordion bass keyboard, and his mastery and knowledge became a legend. Most of us would agree that no one knows more about the mechanics of the bass buttons and chords than does Anthony Galla-Rini. Playing melodies using bass chords alone as he does is no easy task, as only one example.

Recognizing that the action was on the East Coast, he left San Francisco for New York in 1936 and began publishing his arrangements as well as continuing with concert appearances. He continues to publish today through Music Graphics Press, 121 Washington St., San Diego, 92103. Much of his time is spent studying and writing arrangements for publication or for one of his accordion workshops. His immediate plans call for conducting weeklong workshops in Oregon and in Chicago this summer.

Tony usually works from entire orchestral scores to develop his arrangements. He only uses a piano score when the piece was written solely for piano (e.g. Chopin). Some of us were privileged to hear his recent arrangement of Wagner's

Overture from Tannhauser, which was unbelievable.

The Galla-Rini's second bedroom serves as Tony's studio where he practices and works on his arrangements. How does Dolly handle hearing music for hours on end, we wondered. She is his biggest fan, according to her. She appreciates everything he does and is supportive of his many musical ventures. She worries about him, though, and often has to caution him to rest his eyes.

Tony explains it this way: "When I get stuck on something, I take a break and do a little housework." Dolly, with a surprised smile on her face, responded "Housework?? Ha!!."

Frank Montoro

PICNIC REVISITED

Looks like our BAAC picnic on Sunday the 7th was a rousing success on all counts. We had a big and enthusiastic crowd that came early and stayed late! A wide variety of performers showed their stuff from 11A.M. on, but the highlight was, of course, our guest Tony Galla-Rini, whose playing skills and style just keep getting better. How in the world does he ever find all those wonderful sounds we heard during "Rhapsody in Blue"??? Another highlight was Galla-Rini's conducting of the Bay Area Accordion Ensemble in his own arrangement of music from "The Godfather" with John Molinari, Jr. as soloist. After the picnic, about 15 of us moved to Marian's, where we had an opportunity to become better acquainted with Tony and Dolly.

Another highlight was Walter's raffle to which BAAC members Michelle Gallandre, LaVerne Traverso, Tony Di Bono, Lee Woodall, Frank Montoro, Tony Addiego, Bob Souza, Carol Benetti and our friend Gordon from Columbo all contributed. It seems inadequate to only *thank* Walter Traverso for making this happen, given the amount of work he put into this picnic. So let's also give him several gold stars!

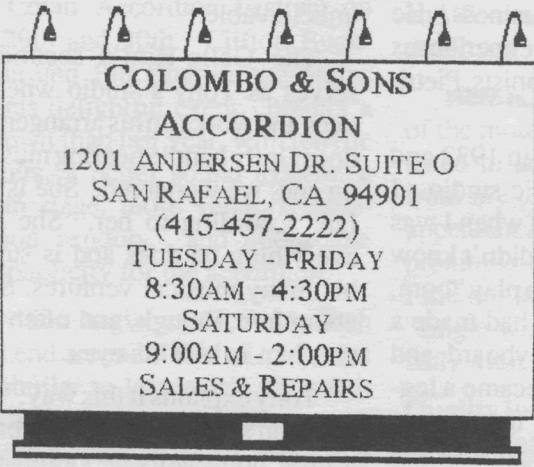
*****WALTER*****

ACCORDION BOOK AUTHOR NEEDS INFO

Karen Gerlovich will squeeze in all the accordion facts she can find!

A life long accordion lover in Florida, Karen Gerlovich is accumulating information for a book on accordions which will feature women accordionists, but which will also include accordion manufacturers and distributors, studios, music teachers, clubs, publications, festivals, memorabilia and collectibles—in short, anything she can locate. Since she wishes to publish in early 1993, she wants to hear from anyone who has information to offer as soon as possible. She is particularly interested in female accordionists, and will include in her book biographical data, photos of you now or as a child prodigy, a list of recordings you have made, songs you have composed, competitions you have appeared in, articles about you in newspapers, etc., etc., etc. Questions —, call Marian at 415-854-1896 or send info to Karen Gerlovich, 3277 Beneva Rd. Unit 104, Sarasota, FL 34232. Phone is 813-922-0890.

BAAC Classified




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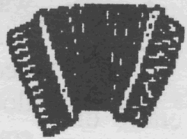
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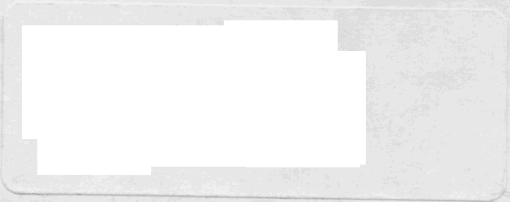
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 COTATI ACCORDION FESTIVAL
 IS LOOKING FOR A VIDEO TAPE OF
 LAST YEAR'S EVENT.
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 48 POPE ST
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NEXT MEETING: MONDAY
 JULY 6, 1992
 7:00PM

HOUSE OF PARTIES
 22 HILLCREST DR.
 DALY CITY

CALL DOMENIC SASO IF YOU
 WOULD LIKE TO PLAY AT THE
 NEXT MEETING..415-587-7557

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 Lou Soper

Co-Conductor
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