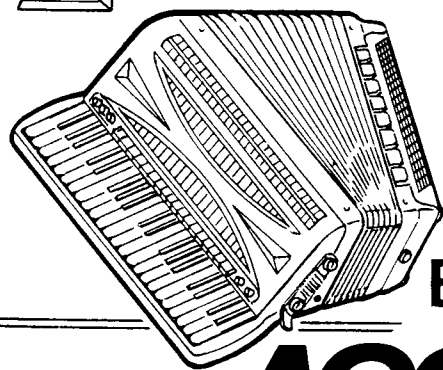


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

# ACCORDION CLUB

MAY, 1995

## *It's Picnic Time Again*

by *President Frank Montoro*

Sunday, June 11th is the date of our annual BAAC picnic. Please mark it on your calendars. This year we will be meeting at a new location, Swiss Park, which is located just across the Bay in Newark. This should make our East Bay members happy. Actually, it isn't any farther from San Francisco than Palo Alto where we have met the past three years.

The address of the park is 5911 Mowry Ave., Newark. From San Francisco or the Peninsula, take a bridge (San Mateo, Dumbarton, or Bay) to 880, then proceed southeast on 880 to Mowry Ave. Turn right onto Mowry, then right again at the traffic light. Page 7 has slightly expanded directions. If you need further directions, you can call Swiss Park at 510-793-6272.

The gate will open at 9 AM. Bring your picnic food and drinks and we'll supply the charcoal. Bar service will be available from noon on.

Bring your families and your accordions. We'll have strolling all morning until 1:30 PM. Our stage program is tentatively scheduled from 1:30 to 4 PM, during which time we will ask that you not jam. If you wish to play for that part of the program, you must sign up by June first. The allotted time will depend on how many people sign up to play. Please, no last minute entries. Call Ed Massolo at 415-589-8409 if you wish to play.

Wouldn't it be a picnic without door prizes? Please bring your contributions to the park and leave them at the front gate. All donations will be welcomed.

Entry tickets are \$5 for adults and free for children 16 and under. Encourage your youngsters to bring outdoor play equipment such as frisbees and volleyballs. If you have shade umbrellas, you might want to bring them.

**Don't forget: No June Meeting. Attend the PICNIC instead!**

## *MARK YOUR CALENDARS*

**June 7th, Wednesday** at 7:30. BAAC Board Meeting at Ed Massolo's, 612 Lassen, So. San Francisco. Guests are always welcome. 415-589-8409.

**June 11th, Sunday.** BAAC annual picnic at Swiss Park in Newark

**June 12th, Monday.** Fun Band Practice, 7:00 PM. House of Parties. Call Domenic, 415-587-7557.

**June 14th & 28th, Wednesdays, 7:00 PM.** BAAC Accordion Practice, House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938

**June 18th, Sunday.** Myron Floren in concert as presented by the San Diego Accordion Club. 210 E. Main St. El Cajon, 3 to 5 PM. Call 619-440-2277.

**June 21st** (summer solstice) Wednesday. Making Waves, San Francisco Music Day.

**June 23, 24, 25.** San Francisco Folk Festival. See article p. 4.

**June 25, Sunday.** Fifth annual *Day of The Accordion* Festival & Northwest accordion teachers' competition. Featuring Leo Aquino concert. Seattle Concert House (206) 783-3593, (206) 282-4934.

*cont. p. 4*

## May General Membership Meeting

by Bob Berta



Norma Parsons

The May membership meeting was the occasion of our annual Ladies' Night. A HUGE crowd turned out for the HUGE entertainment agenda. Close to 200 members were there to cheer on the ladies of our club! If we keep on getting crowds like this we may be knocking out a wall of the gym to expand into the school yard!

The meeting started with **Nora Mazzara** in fine renditions of *Besame' Mucho*, *Jolly Caballero* and *The Guapa-Tango*. **Nora** has great technique and did an excellent job on all the numbers but the crowd really enjoyed her fine playing of *Jolly Caballero*.

One of **John Molinari Jr's** students was up next. **Kelly Koehn** has been heard a couple of times before at our meeting and it's obvious that her musicianship is increasing wonderfully. Her selections of *The Entertainer*, *Aragonaise* and *Espana Cani* showcased her skill.

**Kristine Kopal**, another youngster, impressed the audience with her renditions of *Annie's Song*, *Sharpshooters March*, and *Gruss Aus Schwarzwald*.

The adults again took the stage with a fine performance by **Marjorie Konrad** of the *Cutie Waltz* and *Tyrolean Echoes*.



Diana Gutkin

The next group up is one that hasn't played for us before. Even though **Barbara Ann Barnett** has been a member of our club for some time she hasn't been able to play for us since she is always busy on club nights. She was joined by **Mimi Hills** on guitar and **Barbara Montoro-Swan** on string bass. They played a few crowd pleasing favorites, *Jesse Polka*, *La Golondrina* and *Lime Rock*. The last tune, *Lime Rock*, is actually a popular fiddlers tune and **Barbara** did a great job of emulating the effect of a fiddler playing it. The audience really got into their music, and we hope they'll be back!

Next we enjoyed an unusual group that utilizes music to promote both the accordion and women's rights. The group is called "The Gospel Accordion to Women" and is under the tutelage of **Nancy DeStefanis**. They delight in taking well known tunes and adding their own lyrics. They played a song about San Francisco to the tune of *Sesame Street*, a song about some rare birds in a zoo called *My Blue Herons* (to the tune of *My Blue Heaven*) and *Melody of Love*.

During the intermission everybody had a chance to meet the various musicians, new members and guests. At the end of the intermission the meeting resumed with a short

business meeting to confirm the recommendations of the nominating committee for the new board and officers for 1995/1996. I felt like a condemned man on his way down the long hall to the electric chair and hoping for a call from the governor. Unfortunately it never came and I was confirmed as the new president! Seriously though...I think we have an outstanding slate of new officers and I see a lot of enthusiasm and commitment to make this club even bigger and better.

The first group up after the intermission was the trio known as "Feminili Siciliana." Billed as stars



Special Guests *Feminili Siciliana*

## Ladies' Night, cont.

On stage and screen in Sicily the three ladies took the stage for spirited renditions of *Samba Italianni*, *Lazy Mary* and *In The Mood*. Under those skirts, hairy legs and atrocious make-up jobs the audience quickly realized they were being spoofed by the DiBono family, Reno, Peter and Tony. Not able to hold back a chance for a really great jam session, head Swamp Dog, Jim Boggio, joined in and left the audience laughing at the antics of the foursome. I understand that talent scouts in the audience offered them a recording contract with Gillette razor company and Revlon.

Once the crowd regained its composure **Valerie Kieser** came up for her performances of *Soprani Smile Polka*, *Polish Oberek* and *Finnish Polka*. Val has been seeing a doctor about some pains in her hands but you would never know it from her beautiful playing. She would have been pleased to know I overheard our new vice-president **Joe Smiell** commenting on her fine performance.

**Norma Parsons**, a teacher and performer from San Jose, gave us fine performances of *Miami Beach Rhumba*, *I Surrender Dear/I Don't Know Why*, and *Musettina*. Besides being a wonderful accordionist, **Norma** also possesses a voice to kill for! She has a very fluid style and is always a crowd pleaser.

Members of our club know that we have come to appreciate the outstanding skills of several fine bayan (Russian style diatonic accordion) players. **Diana Gutkin** has only been in the US about 1 1/2 years and in her second performance for our club again "blew us away" with her technical virtuosity. This time she played all Russian tunes. Her incredible performance of Ferapontoff's *Monastery* was followed by a 4 part suite, *The Old Hand Organ*, *The Cock's Fight*, *The Little Polka* and *The Music Box* from the Dusseldorf. She performs and also teaches on this wonderful instrument...hmmmm...I wonder if it is true "You can't teach an old dog new tricks"...I wouldn't mind learning how to play the bayan.

On this night of multicultural enthusiasm, it was time for the music of France. **Odile Lavault** played her pretty button box and sang the gorgeous French tunes, *Accordéon*, *L'Indifference* and *Le Temps Des Cerises*. Wow! What moving music.

Last but not least was our beloved past president and newsletter editor, **Marian Kelly**. Her playing of *Desafinado*, *Toboggan Rag*, *The Way You Look Tonight* (the first and third numbers arranged by Galla-Rini) and her encore performance of *Samba Baby* left us breathless. New member (he joined during the meeting) Peter Adler is a Bandoneon and Astier enthusiast. I am sure he felt welcomed by the glorious French music of **Odile** and **Marian's** neat arrangement of Astier's *The Toboggan Rag* played so well by Marian. Don't forget...no meeting next month...see you at the picnic!



Back Row: Ann Bonzani, Lee Woodall, Nora Mazarra, Marjorie Konrad, Norma Parsons, Diana Gutkin, Mimi Hills, Barbara Ann Barnett, Marian Kelly, Barbara Montoro Swan. Front Row: Val Kieser, Kristine Kopal, We-Didn't Get-Her-Name, Kelly Koehn, Odile Lavault.

**Mark Your Calendars, cont.**

**July 2nd.** Accordion Jamboree 1995. Held at the Donkey Deli Beer Garden, 322 Third St., San Juan Bautista, 11 to 6. (408) 623-4521.

**July 3 thru 8th,** Kimberley International Old-Time Accordion Championships, Kimberley, B.C. Call (604) 427-4877.

**July 7th - 12th,** American Accordionists' Association Festival, Houston honoring Bill Palmer at JW Marriott on Westheimer. Reservations: 1-800-231-6058. For competition and event info, call (516) 746-3100.

**July 8th, Saturday.** Festa Italiana in Lodi, at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, all day. Featuring Dick Contino and The Gaylords..

**July 9th - 15th.** Button Box Camp. Call Joe Smiell, 510-832-6938.

**July 10th, Monday.** BAAC General Meeting. Accordion "Swap" Night.

**July 20th-23rd.** Accordion Teachers' Guild International Competition and Festival, Kansas City MO. Concerts, competitions, workshops, master-classes. Call 816-756-1720.

**July 23rd, Sunday.** Festa Italiana di San Mateo. Street Fair on B St. San Mateo, 10A to 6P. Y'all come and bring your accordions!

**July 23rd to 28th.** Sixth Annual Galla-Rini Accordion Camp in Silver Falls, Oregon sponsored by Accordion World, and featuring Jorgen Sundeqvist assisting Tony. Call John Bonica (Accordion World) at (503)-244-2545 or (503) 257-9648.

**July 28th, Friday.** Jorgen Sundeqvist in concert, 7 PM. 5516 S.E. Foster Road, Portland, OR. Call Accordion World, 503-244-2545.

**July 30th, Sunday,** Jorgen Sundeqvist and Carmen Carrozza in concert 2 PM. 16101 Greenwood Ave, Seattle, WA. Sponsored by Petosa Accordions 206-632-2700.

**August 7th, Monday.** BAAC General Meeting featuring special guest artist Jorgen Sundeqvist.

**August 10th - 13th,** Leavenworth, Washington International Accordion Celebration and Competition. Call Anne Koenig, (509) 548-5807.

**August 23rd- 27th.** (note date change) AFNA (Accordion Federation of North America) celebrates its 40th birthday with a bangup Festival at the Hyatt at LAX. Call 213-686-1769 for info and reservations.

**August 26th and 27th,** Cotati Accordion Festival. Held in beautiful downtown Cotati from 10 to 7 both days. Admission \$5, but reduced to \$2. if you are accompanied by an accordion. Performers include Dick Contino (both days), Kenny Kotwitz, Leo Aquino, Jorgen Sundeqvist. For more info, call Clifton Buck-Kauffman or Rebecca Brown at 707-664-1302.

**Sept. 10th - 16th.** Button Box Camp. Call Joe Smiell, 510-832-6938.

**FESTA ITALIANA di San Mateo**

July 23rd, Sunday

BAAC has been invited again to participate by appearing on stage and/or by strolling in the 9th annual Festa Italiana di San Mateo, to be held on B Street in San Mateo Sunday, July 23rd from 10A to 6P.

We've been a welcome presence at the Festival, held to benefit PARCA, for several years now; the chairman, John Giosso, sent us a letter saying that they would be delighted to have BAAC attend. If you would like to be on stage, please call Mr. Giosso at (415) 345-0409 and let him know.

**SAN FRANCISCO****FREE FOLK FESTIVAL**

You'll find lots of accordions, concertinas, and button boxes as well as an accordion workshop at the San Francisco Free Folk Festival from Friday evening, June 23rd through Sunday eve, June 25th. And, if you bring your own accordion, you will only add to the festivities. An open mike will be set up for you to strut your stuff; additionally, a free, secured instrument check area will be available to you so you don't have to take your instrument everywhere.

The concerts and performances are continuous Friday eve and both Sat and Sun from noon on. International dancing is scheduled Friday evening and a contra dance on Saturday evening. Workshops will be held both afternoons.

The location is Roosevelt Middle School, 460 Arguello, San Francisco, between Clement & Geary, and all admission is FREE. The event is all-volunteer. Performers, workshop leaders & organizers volunteer their time and talent.

For more info, call 510-521-8764.

Q. What is the epitome of arrogance?

A. An accordion player with a beeper.

from Rusty Bartoli

## May Board Meeting

### Synopsis

- No Treasurer's report was presented, as Algis was away on business.
- Several people discussed the picnic. It was decided that we should rent a sound system for this event at a cost of \$200. People are needed to sell tickets at the entrance. Door prizes are also needed.
- Ed Massolo and Frank Panacci travel to Seattle to play for the Northwest Accordion Club on May 8th. The Board is fearful that they will be such a success that Northwest will keep them!
- Plans are under way for BAAC's booth at Cotati. We will be much more organized than last year; we will have items for sale and will work at promoting our Club. Frank Montoro is in charge.
- Our June 7th Board meeting will be a transitional one; both current and incoming board members are asked to attend.
- New Board members Frank Schlotter and Bob Smith will audit our books after June deposits are made.
- Annual dues will be payable again July 1. Ed Massolo suggested that we send bills this year rather than just putting the notices into the newsletter.
- Our July meeting will be an accordion swap night. The Club will take a fee of 5% of the selling price of any item changing hands that evening.
- The Club will purchase a sturdy music stand for use at meetings. It will be stored on site at Donworth Hall between meetings.
- Henceforth, any person performing at a general meeting will not be charged the \$2 entrance fee.

MK

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## IMPRESSIONS

*by Eino Huhtala*

I volunteered to turn the pages of my granddaughter's sheet music during the Ladies' Night accordion club performance because she felt apprehensive about leaving gaps in the continuity of the music. After I expounded about the importance of the pageturner to follow closely and turn the page at the right moment to prevent a catastrophe, Kelly began to play. Everything went smoothly until the last sheet had to be turned, and yours truly blundered by turning prematurely.

How could that happen? Easily! Not because an almost octogenarian with the frailties of that age, like loss of hearing, vision, and memory — none of these. It was because I allowed myself to take time off the job to gaze at the audience, and I momentarily lost concentration. Glancing back at the score, my eyes

inadvertently focused on similar repeating phrasing several bars below the actual place that the player was on, resulting in a page turned too early.

Our young accordionist did not falter nor panic, but took immediate command of the situation. She quickly flipped the page herself, pointed to the correct spot, turned her face to me and gave me a forgiving smile, made the exclamation "Oh, Grandpa!" and continued to play to the finish. This demonstrated to me that she has what it takes to become a fine accordion artist.

In a way, this was a lesson for both of us. For me, not to lose concentration the next time. For her, that a slight interruption caused by page turns will not materially detract from her performance in front of a knowledgeable and discriminating audience.

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The Ladies' program was a fantastic one, providing the audience with a great variety of selections and styles of playing. I believe that everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening's musical tour of the world, which brought tantalizing excerpts of music from Russia, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, and South and North America.

The visiting quartet and the trios added spice to the show and, for wonderful comedy, there were the three visiting pseudo ladies from Sicily, "Signora" DeBono and "daughters." Bouquets also for the many soloists who entertained us all with exhilarating and rarely heard music.

## Accordions That Are A "Little Different"

by Bob Berta



Master craftsman Vince Cirelli recently completely rebuilt my 30 year old Neronde dual tone chamber accordion. Vince is probably the only person left in the western US who still builds an accordion from scratch. I admire the skills needed to build a fine work of art, and the accordion certainly is a work of art. I asked him to show me what goes into constructing an accordion.

Each one is a hand made creation with about 4,000 parts consisting of wood, steel, aluminum, leather, felt, beeswax, rosin, and fabric. All of the components require extensive hand work. Even a "simple" piano accordion key has 12 individual parts. That means there are nearly 500 parts just in the treble keys! The accordion body is made of wood cut and fitted together with fine woodworking skill. The plastic finish is actually a thin skin of acetate (30/1000s of an inch thick) which has been softened in acetone and stretched over the wooden frame. The sound of the instrument is a function not of just the reeds but of the construction, the combination of materials used in the accordion, and the shape of the box. Like a fine violin an accordion sonic quality is a result of years of learning many craft skills and of refining the builder's craft.

While visiting Vince I photographed accordion components including assembly and sub-assembly procedures. I attempted to document the complete assembly process from the smallest component to the finished instrument. I also took the opportunity to question him as we went through the various steps so that

I could increase my limited knowledge. I will be utilizing these pictures and notes to write future columns, but first I wanted to feature a couple of unusual accordions in Vince's shop.

The first is an accordion made about 1930 by the Standard Accordion Company. The craftsman's name on the grill was Elio Taffi, a relative of Gordon Piatanesi of Colombo Accordion Corp. fame. The angular keyboard is the obvious oddity. Evidently this design was an attempt at a "better" keyboard arrangement. A similar accordion is shown in the book The Golden Age of the Accordion. If you don't have a copy of this book, I recommend it highly.

The other accordion is even more unique, in my opinion. This is a Flowtone accordion from the same period. The keyboard is angled back at a sharp angle from the more traditional keyboard. While this is certainly an interesting exercise in creativity, Vince says that it was VERY difficult to play. I guess it was some sort of an effort to design a more ergonomically correct keyboard. Could it be that one of our relatives had a problem with that new malady of the computer age, carpal tunnel syndrome??

Tune into future columns as I share what I learned from Vince. He also said that as we go on and you have questions which aren't answered in my columns, he would be happy to answer additional questions from readers. Vince has also volunteered to put together a session on accordion repairs, how they work, preservation, etc. Tentatively, we might work this into an accordion workshop later in the year. The workshop would have an assortment of special interest subjects like MIDI accordions, button box, circle of 5ths, harmony, arranging, accordion bands, etc. If you think this would be a good idea or you would like to participate, please let me know at a future meeting or drop me a line.

## DIRECTIONS TO SWISS PARK IN NEWARK

Swiss Park is right off Mowry, about 1/2 mile S.W. of 880. Mowry is a Newark freeway exit from 880, 2 exits S of 84 (Dumbarton Bridge) and several exits S of 92 (San Mateo Bridge). After you are on Mowry, going SW from 880, you will see the Newark Mall on your left. Turn **right** at the first traffic light (Alpenrose), with the '76 gas station on the corner at your right. You will see the sign on the Swiss Park building about 75 yards ahead on your left.

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## *British Humor??*

reprinted from the  
Portsmouth, England Journal

"What the prosecution says is technically true," lawyer Henri Janssens admitted to a court in Brasschaat, Belgium. "Before prescribing contact lenses, my client, who is a state registered optician, did indeed frequently order women to strip naked and dance around his consulting room while he played the accordion. However, there are mitigating circumstances which I ask the magistrates to take into consideration. The fact is that the defendant qualified in England where, he assures me, such techniques are commonplace." The defendant was later acquitted. Unfortunately there are no details about the type of accordion, or the sort of music played...

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## WHO'S PLAYING?

**Odile Lavault** with the Baguette Quartet (violin, guitar/mandolin, contrabass) playing popular dance music as in Paris from 1920 to 1940.

- Sunday, June 11th at The Baltic, 135 Park Place, Point Richmond, 6:30P (510) 235-2532.

- Thursday July 13th, in concert at Freight & Salvage, 1111 Addison St. Berkeley, 8P. (510) 548-1761.

Reservations recommended.

**Bob Delgado** at Lake Elizabeth Park Center, Paseo Parkway, Fremont. Five dollars buys you catered dinner plus Bob's concert. 5 to 6P. For info, call 510-790-6921.

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## *Sheet Music By Heart*

It belongs in my heart  
where I can stroke its shape.  
Press my ear on its pulsating center.  
Walk beside it on tiptoe to hear its footsteps.  
It decides our stride, sidepaths and destination.  
My compliance earns its trust.  
It begins to share secrets.  
There are mood swings that I had not suspected.  
I am being told lest I forget  
that it has its own life and purpose.  
It deserves respect.

Later perhaps when we know each other intimately  
We will have a dialogue.

*Mary-Alice Eldon*

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**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY**  
July 10, 1995  
7:00 PM

Donworth Hall  
22nd & Eucalyptus  
SAN FRANCISCO

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLAY AT A MEETING, CALL ED AT 415-589-8409**

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Frank Montoro

Co-Conductor  
Bob Berta

Banker  
Algis Ratnikas

Teller  
Glenn McClelland

Scribe  
Josephine Hornbrook