

THE BAAC PAGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO
BAY AREA ACCORDION CLUB



October, 1991

Editors: Marian Kelly
Dominic Palmisano

MINUTES, OCTOBER MEETING

Lou Soper, President, opened the meeting by thanking Peter DiBono for chairing the last BAAC meeting. He called on the guests to be recognized and then applauded Domenic Saso for his upcoming program.

1. Dan Cooper entertained us by playing and singing two songs from the 1930s—"Just a Gigolo" and "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries."
2. Ray, a guest, played "Tenderly" and "Beyond the Reef" for us.
3. Algis Ratnikas played "La Virginia a la Macharinas" and then played and sang a Lithuanian lovesong.
4. Hans Frei played two lively tunes for our entertainment

Lou began the second half by applauding the fine article Barbara Hartley wrote for the Sept. Newsletter. He informed us that BAAC now has grown to 181 members. He said the accordion is growing in dignity and respectability thanks to everyone in the club. Now other accordion clubs want to follow in our footsteps. In our continuing efforts to improve our Monday night gatherings, we ask for your input.

Jim Holliday commented that he thought a good job was done at the Cotati Festival. Lou agreed that the accordion put Cotati on the map and added that the city fathers are excited about next year's event. He further said that we are striving to bring in Zydeco and Cajun players

for our entertainment.

The secretary was asked to read the Minutes of the Officers and Board of Directors' meeting of Oct. 4th. In the subsequent discussion, the question of saying the Pledge of Allegiance was brought up, and there are strong feelings pro and con. A motion was carried that we repeat the Pledge of Allegiance before each general meeting. And—a motion was made to START THE MUSIC.

5. Domenic Saso then introduced Val Ballerini who amusingly played "That's Amore" and "Eh Compari." His wife sang "On the Sunny Side of the Street."


6. Clyde Forsman played two rousing Swedish songs, a schottische and a waltz.

7. Three-year-old Christopher, our youngest guest ever, in full Tyrolean costume, played "Silent Pete."

8. Hans Bakke collects unusual accordions and demonstrated one of them—a bandonium, with diatonic tuning for us.

9. Tom Cordoni closed the meeting on an accordion he got in Italy 30 years ago. We heard "Under Paris Skies," "I'm in the Mood for Love," Cumanchera, and "Zorba the Greek."

See you on November 4th!

Rae Lembi 

Conductor's Column

It's great to be back from vacation—that's BAAC! As I reflect over the year 1991, it is very gratifying to review the exciting activities which have occurred.

Starting in February with a guest performance by Lou Fanucchi, then the Art Van Damme concert in May, followed by that wonderful picnic in June where we hosted the accordion king, Anthony Galla-Rini. The August festival in Cotati gave us great exposure for the accordion in which our Bay Area Accordion Club made a significant contribution in talent and assistance.

The most recent accordion festival at Anchorage Plaza in October, engineered by Tom Torriglia, was a great success. We salute you, Tom.

In the future, the officers and board of directors are planning a different talent agenda for each meeting which should provide a greater cross section of musical entertainment. We will attempt to engage a gifted guest artist for a performance every three months.

Exciting things are happening. See you at the November 4th meeting.

Lou Soper

PROFILE OF LOU FANUCCHI

Lou Fanucchi's artistry features a wonderfully innovative style that is hard to describe. His Cotati performance demonstrated his profound mastery of the instrument with his own harmonic structures and complex rhythms.

His repertoire is decidedly modernistic in both his selections and interpretations. The sounds and rhythms that his left hand produces are quite unlike anything most of us have even experimented with. We all marveled at his facility with Latin American style—remember "Quando, Quando"? And how about his medley from "Phantom of the Opera"? Gorgeous stuff! You were hearing his own interpretations, which evolved mostly from careful listening to recordings. He is equally at home playing classics such as Rossini's "La Danza" and Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" which he demonstrated at our February BAAC meeting.

He lives in San Diego with his wife Lauren, whom he met in Seattle where she was playing guitar. Her son, Adam, made three, and Lauren arrived six months ago to complete their quartet.

Lou has studied with great accordion teachers and has certainly made the most of his mentors. At seven and a half

he began his studies with Charles Bertolino. At fifteen Anthony Galla-Rini became his teacher as Lou sharpened his technique and knowledge of the instrument. More recently, Frank Moracco has been of great help in developing Lou's unique style. Along the way, Lou just happened to earn an AB Degree from San Diego State University in Accordion Performance.

He began his professional playing career at age fifteen. Now he plays weekly at several San Diego area restaurants. He is frequently called upon to play big shows that come to San Diego. His credits include "Fiddler on the Roof." American Ballet of New York, sound tracks for the movie "Beaches," and a first place award for National Virtuoso of the Accordion in 1984 at Colorado Springs.

He has a wonderful tape available. Just write him at 3405 Union St. San Diego, CA 92103, and enclose a check for \$10.00

Lou's great talent and his ability to look for new sounds and rhythms are a wave of the future. We will hear his name mentioned more and more as he makes it big in the accordion world.

Frank
Montoro

BOARD MEETING, OCTOBER 4, 1991

- The Secretary read the minutes of the September 4, 1991 meeting.
- The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$3568 in the general account and \$650 in the performance fund.
- The BAAC page editors were unhappy with the quality of the September issue and are taking steps to remedy the situation.
- Peter needs volunteers to play at Festa Italiana October 25, 26, 27. Anyone willing, please call him.
- After a discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed that we limit the general meetings at which any BAAC member plays to once every three months.
- Peter has contacted a potential guest artist in Toronto and is attempting to bring him to our December meeting.
- Algis Ratnikas will now handle the bar with Kitty Piiwa assisting.
- Following a long discussion, a motion was made, seconded and passed that we ask a different member to handle each month's general meeting. That member will be expected to organize the meeting's format and performers with the goal of greater diversity and interest.
- Paul Pasquali, as conductor of the newly formed accordion orchestra, has recruited seven accordionists, five from BAAC, who are now busily perfecting several fine arrangements under Paul's guidance.

Rae Lembi

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...

There's no doubt that our club is fulfilling a long dormant desire to revive playing and enjoying the accordion. The rapidly growing membership, currently approaching 185, and the excellent turnout at meetings and events bear ample testimony to that. Many of us had feared the demise of our instrument, and finding so many others who share our interest is exciting and motivates us to bring our instruments out of the closet, to practice, to share our talent and enthusiasm with others.

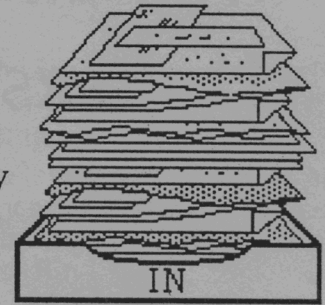
Since our reemergence seems to be going so well, perhaps it is time to ask what we see as the accordion's future. Will our instrument be alive and well 50 years from now, playing ethnic music, jazz, oldies for dancing, a little Bach, or perhaps whatever sort of music is popular in 2041?? Or will this window of time which are we now experiencing close because of disinterest on the part of those

younger than many of us? Do we care about the status of our instrument in the future? Should we be trying to plan for the accordion's acceptance by the next generation or two? How might we go about that?

It is reasonable to assume the position that we are entertaining ourselves, one another, and whoever cares to listen by doing what we do best and that we should stick with what is working rather than making changes. After all, today is what is important to us all, and none of us can possibly predict what the world will be like in 50 years. And, for heavens sake, think about the stuff young people these days call music!!

On the other hand, we have already said that we wish to promote the accordion through the schools, and, in an attempt to extend our musical tradition, a few of us have played at school assemblies. We have not, however, formulated a thorough plan for visiting schools, for contacting parents of interested students, for making music and teachers available. Clearly, then, some of us do want to insure a healthy future for Our Instrument.

Let's have some dialogue from the membership on this issue, on related topics, or on other musical or club issues. With this edition of the BAAC Page, we are establishing a "Letters to the Editor" column, and we invite each of you to submit your ideas. We may edit your letter, but we will attempt to publish everything we receive.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

When the minutes of the previous Board of Directors meeting were being read at the last BAAC meeting, I listened first with incredulity, then with embarrassment and hurt. Now I am angry. It seems to me that that reading offended many members. I heard accusations of un-patriotism; I saw an understandably irate Joe Smiell and I heard my own words and those of other board members repeated in a manner which distorted both content and intent.

The following is my honest recollection of what was said at the Board meeting.

- No one said that the Pledge of Allegiance should not be recited. Several of us questioned the necessity for it and the manner in which it was being led. No vote was taken.

- I did not use the term "oom pah pah." I did say "oom pah" in talking about alternating bass. This is an acronym used by most accordion players (piano players call it "stride" I think).

- I suggested that a different person be appointed to conduct one BAAC meeting a year with that conductor free to present whatever type of accordion entertainment she chose. I think we would get a lot of new ideas this way, and, hopefully, a better meeting. I feel that BAAC meetings have gotten pretty dull largely because of their disorganization. I discussed this with Lou and other members about eight months ago. Since no action was taken, and the meetings continued to deteriorate, I raised the issue at the Board meeting, and the Board agreed to implement my idea.

I now recall Lou's original response to my idea which was that he would have his say when the time was right. I

wonder whether the time was right at the last BAAC meeting. I also recall a conversation with Lou in which he said, "This is my club, I started it, and I can shut it down." Both these statements concern me. I have two questions: First, was the motion for a reading of the Minutes an extemporaneous occurrence? Second, am I the only one who believes that the Minutes were read in an inflammatory manner?

I apologize for anything, real or imagined, that I might have said that was offensive, especially to our veterans and their families. I display my flag every holiday, and had it displayed during the entirety of the Iraq War. Joe Smiell... Joe has achieved a virtuoso level of playing, and scholarly musicianship that I still aspire to attain. I would never say the things that were attributed to me in the Minutes.

Peter A. Di Bono

Please send Letters to the Editor to Marian Kelly
31 Aliso Way, Portola Valley, CA 94028

SAN FRANCISCO

ACCORDION FESTIVAL

The first Annual San Francisco International Accordion Festival on October 5th and 6th was unanimously regarded as a rousing success. Over 5,000 attended this 2-day weekend festival at Fisherman's Wharf, and a good time was had by all.

Each day was kicked off by members of BAAC who strolled through the courtyard then out onto Jefferson for the passersby to see and hear and who added a great deal to the ambiance both before and during the main festivities.

The line-up of acts was as diverse as it was entertaining. We heard the French cabaret sounds of Salut Matelot, Chinese folk music and Neapolitan song stylings of Steve Shen, the usual eclectic set of material from Those Darn Accordions!, the operatic duo

Romaccordion, Los Tres Elementos who played tangos and polkas, Jim Boggio and the Gypsy Jazzers. On Sunday, the entertainment was different. Steve Shen brought the Shennettes, then came Josef Brinkman and the Conspiracy of Equals, after which we were treated to Motor Dude Zydeco. Lots of foot stomping by then!

The highlight of both days was the Ms Accordion San Francisco Pageant. Contestants were judged on their playing proficiency, on their polka outfits, and on their response to why they wanted this great honor. The winner was Suzanne Garramone, esteemed musical director for TDA. We went home exhausted but delighted with our wonderfully successful weekend!

Tom
Torriglia



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CALL DOMENIC SASO IF YOU
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NEXT MEETING..415-587-7557

Conductor
Lou Soper

Co-Conductor
Peter DiBono

Scribe
Rae Lembi

Banker
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Teller
Carol Benetti