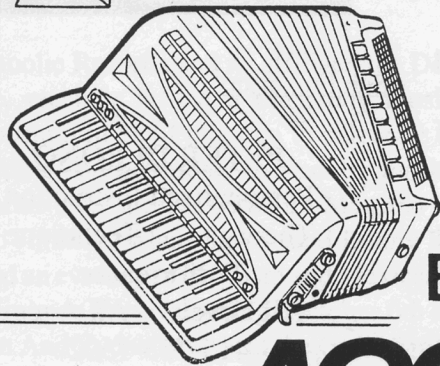


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB

OCTOBER, 1995

October General Meeting

by Denny Huff

The evening was short on number of acts, but long on music. As a matter of fact, several performers who had volunteered to play at this meeting were moved to later months because of the length of the program. If you were one of the "moved" acts, your consideration in helping to accommodate our out-of-town players is greatly appreciated.

Our MC for the evening was a new, but certainly not an unknown face. **Ed Massolo** kindly stepped in for vacationing **Domenic Saso** and did a wonderful job.

A lesser act than **Ron and Elaine Zucca** could have been overshadowed by our guests, but not the **Zuccas**. **Ron and Elaine** have played at the club before, at Cotati (the "Second" Stage in 1993) and at Festa Italiana (for several years, I think). In any event, we have enjoyed their music before, and it was nice to see and hear them again. They started with *La Campagnola*, then another terrific Spanish number, *Granada*, which were full of spirit and enthusiasm, as is all of their music. **Ron** demonstrated his bellows shake during a *Polka Medley*, and they then went on to do an old

favorite and crowd pleaser, *Five Foot Two*. It certainly had me tapping my feet. I would have liked to have heard more, but it was time to clear the stage for the next act.

About a thousand years ago, stalwart Vikings set forth from Scandinavian fjords and villages to "visit" the world. And they left an indelible mark which stretched

cont. on p. 4



October Guest Chuck Berger

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 29th, Sunday. Joint concert with the Nick Ariondo Chamber Ensemble and Concert Pianist from Japan. Cal State University at Los Angeles, 5151 State University Drive. (Theater-State Playhouse). Call the Music Dept., 213-343-4060.

November 1st, Wed. BAAC Board Meeting, 7:30 PM at Ed Massolo's, 612 Lassen, So. S.F. Guests welcome. Call Ed at 589-8409 for directions.

November 6th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting featuring Joe Smiell and his entire group, who will play for the entire second half of the meeting. First half performers include the trio of Lee Woodall, Tony Di Bono, and Jim Firpo; Ellen Karel; Kelly Koehn; and Reno Di Bono. If you've missed hearing Joe recently, here's your chance! Donworth Hall, 22nd and Eucalyptus, S.F., just north of Stonestown Shopping Ctr. 7PM.

November 13th, Monday. Fun Band Practice, 7:00 PM. Conductor Domenic Saso. House of Parties. (415) 587-7557.

November 8th and 22nd, second and fourth Wednesdays, 7:00 PM. BAAC Accordion Practice, House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938.

October Board Meeting Synopsis

- Treasurer Algis Ratnikas announced bank balances totaling \$9266. The Board approved his revised budget, which is printed on p. 7 in this newsletter.
- Marian will ask Jim Boggio to come to our next meeting to describe his concept of a Cajun workshop and to ask him what he will need from us. We are still intending to hold several workshops in March.
- The Board decided against holding a raffle at each meeting, since a raffle is illegal in California. We will probably structure a drawing with an acceptable format and begin implementing it shortly.
- A resolution proposed by Frank Montoro was passed. It states that new members who pay \$20 to join between March 1st and June 30th of any year will automatically have their membership extended through the following BAAC year. (This has already been happening without specific policy.) It states further that a prior year member who simply neglects to pay current dues until March or later will *not* thereby have membership extended through the following BAAC year.
- In discussing guest artists, past and present, the Board concluded the following:
 Chuck Berger's visit to our October meeting was a definite success, from our point of view and, we hope, from his. He certainly seemed to be pleased by the number of tapes which he sold. We also depended on tape sales for the Kil, Sweden group that evening; their sales were far less successful.

In general, we wish to increase the number of guest artists at our meetings. We'll start in January with Ken Olendorf.

Local BAAC members will not be considered "Guest Artists."

- It is time for a review of policy decisions by past boards. Val will attempt to coordinate.
- A suggestion was made by a member that we have a fund available to pay a stipend to "side men" whom members bring in to play with them at meetings. The motion that we *not* pay side men was passed unanimously.

MK

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COTATI FESTIVAL 1996

The Cotati Festival Committee has announced that next year's Festival will no longer be held at the plaza in the middle of town and that the Committee is in search of an alternate location for the 1996 Accordion Festival.

They have been quite aware that the downtown plaza where the Festival has been held for five years is small and that there are real limits to the size of the crowd that can be accommodated. But the real motivator came this year when the City of Cotati told the Committee that, partly due to budgetary constraints

imposed from Sacramento, they would require a substantial additional payment from the Committee for use of the site.

Therefore the Committee is looking for another Festival site. Ideally, it would have stages which are already in place (and need not be put up and torn down before and after each Festival), a fence, and permanent bathroom facilities. Additionally, it needs to be near Cotati. If you have an idea or suggestions, please call Clifton Buck-Kauffman at 707-664-0444.

MK

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1996 IS THE YEAR OF THE ACCORDION !!

GREAT TEX-MEX AND CAJUN IN SAN FRANCISCO

Arhoolie Records and its affiliate, the Down Home Music Store, recently hosted a three day music festival and a symposium in San Francisco to celebrate their 35th year of recording and producing vernacular music. Helping them celebrate their success with Tex-Mex and Cajun music were Flaco Jiminez, Marc Savoy, and Danny Poullard who presented an evening of Mexican and Mexican-American music at Slim's on Friday evening, October 6th and an evening of Cajun And Zydeco music at the Great American Music Hall on October 7th.

On Saturday October 7th, a two-hour accordion workshop was attended by 60 people, including BAAC member Val Kieser and former BAAC member Greg Urban. Their reactions are condensed in the paragraphs below.

Marc Savoy talked about his own tiny single-row, key of D, four reeds per note button accordion and what he can do with it. He provided some historical perspective about the way in which Cajun music developed partly because of the limitations of the one-row box such as his. He said that the first accordions brought into the South by German immigrants from about 1850 onward until the 1920's were all in keys such as Bb, F or Eb. It wasn't until after the war that ones in keys such as C and D were available. This meant that accordions and fiddles were not played together until the 20's, since the Cajuns regarded the fiddle as a diatonic instrument and did not play it in keys other than C,A,D, and G. Since the accordion and fiddle were played together a lot in C and D, it forced the men to sing in the high voice characteristic of Cajun singing. Marc believes that these "limitations" concentrated the power of Cajun music and gave it more heart and character. His musical philosophy is summed up in his motto "It's not what you have, it's what you do with it."

Flaco Jiminez, had a plain 3-row GCF Hohner Corona II with him. "Straight from the factory," he said. When someone noted that most Tex-Mex players have at least two accordions in order to play in other keys, Flaco said that that was because they didn't know how to play so well. He also spoke of the importance of playing from the heart. Marc had spoken about there being two different kinds of players, those fascinated by technique and those who were more interested in playing with feeling. Flaco added "Yes, but if you can combine the two..." and gestured to a spot in front of him as if to say "...then you have something." Greg says that Flaco was by far the most technically proficient of the players showing great fluidity and a precision that he has only before seen in top-notch classically trained musicians.

YEAR OF THE ACCORDION

The **American Accordionists' Association**, at its gathering in Houston in July of this year, proclaimed 1996 as The Year of the Accordion. AAA is encouraging accordionists everywhere to play more frequently in public in 1996 to educate the non-accordionist public to the possibilities and potential of our favorite instrument!

The AAA, founded in 1938, is a multi-purpose, non-profit organization with the following purposes and objectives:

- To provide the media and public with information to stimulate an increasing awareness of, knowledge about, and appreciation for the accordion.
- To promote unity within the accordion community by encouraging co-operation among members and with other organizations which work on behalf of the instrument.
- To set and maintain high standards for those interested in the accordion, thereby working to facilitate and coordinate the various segments of the accordion world.
- To honor achievement throughout the accordion community.
- To organize, sponsor and support competition for accordionists at all levels and dispense scholarships and/or honors to those who distinguish themselves through outstanding performance.
- To organize, sponsor and support workshops, advancing educational standards and artistic levels of accordion enthusiasts.
- To assist all accordion-related organizations with a forum for discussion of matters affecting the accordion in particular, and music in general, both nationally and internationally.

The AAA issues an excellent newsletter six times annually. It is free to all members of the AAA. Non-member subscription presently costs \$18 US, \$25 foreign (as of Spring '95).

AAA Editorial Offices:

P.O. Box 616

Mineola, NY 11501, U.S.A.

To become a member of the AAA send a check for \$25 (associate member) or \$50 (professional member) to:

American Accordionists' Association

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1996 IS THE YEAR OF THE ACCORDION !!

October General Meeting, cont.

throughout Europe to the distant shores of North America. Over the course of the subsequent centuries, they traded in their long boats and broad axes for our favorite

local community. The band played and sang of such things as their home province (Varmland), a "monster" from a local lake, an old waltz from a northern province, an



Elaine and Ron Zucca

instrument, the accordion, and they have ventured from Scandinavia once again!

Ernie Lantz was responsible for bringing the **Kil Accordion Club** from Varmland, Sweden, to play for the BAAC. The Swedish Club has been visiting the US and playing for various audiences, many of which I will assume were Scandinavian. Apparently this isn't their first trip, and it certainly sounds like a fun idea to me. Do you suppose the **Fun Band** will now be wanting to tour Europe???...I'd better sign up just in case.

I had trouble catching all the names of the songs, and even if I could hear them, there wasn't a chance of spelling them correctly. The songs were a mix of waltzes, marches, and polkas. And although the specific names were elusive, the themes were very typical of much European music — usually some thought, event or location important to members of a specific

eel fisherman, a march sung while walking to church, a hot stove poker, and the Saturday Waltz. One number was written by Club Member Ingmar Lundell and played in his honor. It was about a lake near his home village in Sweden.

Band members ran the spectrum of occupations but shared a common interest in music....accordion music, that is. Although they did bring along two guitars and a drummer. They were a fun group who obviously enjoyed what they were doing, and it was nice to share their adventure. We wish them well on the remainder of their trip.

Chuck Berger is another European "wanderer," albeit a generation removed. **Chuck's** ancestors once lived in the lush, green Swiss Alps where, among other things, music and cheese were an integral part of most folks' lives. The family sub-

sequently moved to Wisconsin, where they, not surprisingly, operated a dairy farm and continued the musical tradition in the family. That's where **Chuck** got started playing the accordion, following in the footsteps of his ten year older brother. Now, we all know that **Chuck** is pretty much the master when it comes to Big Band Music on the MIDI Accordion, but I for one am very pleased to hear that he still plays the old Swiss and alpine music from time to time.

It seemed more like a welcomed visit than a performance. **Chuck** mixed up his time with music, anecdotes, and questions and answers with the audience. His laid-back style belied the sophistication of his technique and the complexity of his preparation and performance. He breezed through a California Band theme *Day Dreams*, a "love" medley including *People Will Say We're in Love*, the *Blue Skirt Waltz* (alternately known as North Dakota Cha Cha), the *Swinging Shepherd Blues*, *First Love Waltz*, *Muskrat Ramble*, and *Solitaire*, to mention most of his selections. And, much to my delight, he included several Swiss numbers.

All the music teachers and band leaders in the audience must have appreciated his big plug for keeping up the correct tempo. **Chuck** noted that (1) if the band doesn't play the right tempo, the audience won't be back; and (2) if you don't play the



The Kil (Steel), Sweden Accordion Club

correct tempo, you won't be with that band very long. Other personal notes **Chuck** mentioned included that he makes cabinets and speakers for stage use; he spent much of his 20's playing with small bands; he used to play a lot of Dixieland music (*Muskrat Ramble*), he's single (*Solitaire*), and he used to playa horn!?! (**Chuck** — how could you?) Maybe that's why he likes the MIDI so much — he can occasionally pretend that he's still playing that horn.



Here's Chuck...Making It Look Easy!



You want how many tapes??

Veikko Ahvenainen in China

by Veikko Ahvenainen

Finnish accordion maestro Veikko Ahvenainen visited China in August. The University of Beijing and the Beijing Music Festival invited him to be a special guest artist. Veikko's name is well known in China; his recordings are often played on China radio.

The opening concert at the Beijing Music Festival was attended by 3000 people. Also featured was an accordion orchestra of 200 members. Veikko played his own solo concert in the Beijing University Concert Hall for 2000 persons.

Next Veikko will tell something for our readers about China.

OVER ONE MILLION ACCORDION PLAYERS IN CHINA!!!

China has a population of 1.2 billion people, and over one million of them play the accordion! Everyone plays a piano keyboard accordion. China has four accordion factories which produce 20,000 instruments every year. Beijing has also many accordion schools; there are approximately 10,000 students. They come from all over China to study accordion.

I have listened to many Chinese accordionists during this Festival and I have to say that China has lots of virtuosos and that they are some of the best artists in the world. One of the best virtuosos is young Chinese girl Jin Wei. She played the best *Rhapsody in Blue* by Gershwin that I have ever heard before. What a magnificent artist! Also there were many others, one 8 year old girl played *La Campanella* by Lizst and *Carnival in Venice* with a big piano accordion. After her performance the audience stood and gave her long applause.

During the Festival I played a special performance at the Great Wall. I think that it was the first time somebody played the accordion at the Great Wall. I was also invited to play at the Finnish Embassy. I didn't know that the Finnish minister Markku Kauppinen also plays the accordion. During this wonderful evening we played Finnish music together.

Beijing Music Festival has invited me to play in Hongkong in 1997 where there will be the next big music festival. I will be happy to attend this spectacular event.

Hopefully we can listen to Chinese accordion virtuosos in the future. They have never been outside China; their music should be very welcome in the western world.



Our Viking Visitors, without accordions

CHILDREN and MUSIC

by Bob Berta

When my own children were born, I was full of resolve to shape them in the most enlightened forms possible. They would have perfect habits and perfect childhoods and perfect destinies. Unfortunately I had not reckoned on their having minds of their own.

My oldest son started on the organ, one of his parent's favorites. In time his resourcefulness at avoiding practicing made the sham untenable. He switched to electric guitar. (Many know that I consider the electric guitar to be an embarrassment...it is to instruments as the whoopee cushion is to wit.) So much was his self-esteem massaged by the instructor, however, he progressed and practiced manfully. Then love and other forms of self-indulgence struck, the vices of mankind. The guitar rusted in its case. (I know plastic and wood don't rust but it makes a good story.) By the time of his graduation from high school his career was over. Though my son professes stoutly to love classical music still, I find all manner of noisy, vulgarian fare in his CD collection.

I can go down the list of my friends and find similar experiences. The abiding and greatest wish of their parents is not that the boys, handsome devils, attain fame and money and success, but that they not contract anything untreatable. It is pretty rare for a parent to inspire a love of "good" music in their children. Parents dream of taming their children and giving them all the seeds of the "better" life. Sort of a transformative style, like a butterfly emerging from the pupa. But you end up just driving a jackass down the road. You assist individuals in finding the true, the good, and the beautiful. But you kid yourselves if you think you are the cause of such discovery. The individual was bound to stumble on these some day: you may have shortened the path. But you did not select it.

Across the Editor's Desk.....

October 9, 1995

Dear Editor:

I would be willing to teach accordion repair at our McLean, VA studio without charge to individual members of the BAAC who are especially interested in learning about this much needed phase of the accordion industry. Length of study would probably be 2 1/2 days. Each person would be welcome to stay at our home, and we would see that transportation was provided to and from Dulles or Washington National Airports. Also, my wife DeAnn is a fine cook!

Dale E. Wise, MME

Editor's Note: Dale Wise, one of our newest BAAC members, has an ad in this issue for his own product, Pro Notes 100, a manuscript with cassette which contains left hand accompaniment patterns and examples of their use. Please check it out!

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If you would like to join the San Francisco Bay Area Accordion Club, please send a check for \$20 payable to BAAC to our Financial Secretary, Frank Montoro, 1448 Tarrytown, San Mateo, CA. 94402. You will receive a newsletters through June '96. We welcome all interested persons!

NEW MEMBERS

We've had 30 accordion lovers join our Club in the past two months, and we are proud to tell you that this is a record number of new members in such a brief time period. Here they are....

Melvin A. Abreu, Byron, CA
Anna Amaral, San Francisco, CA
Marie Bacon, San Mateo, CA
Chuck Berger, Portland, OR
Joyce Clements, Bolinas, CA
Vic Corsiglia, Santa Clara, CA
D. Cruickshank, San Jose, CA
Vince Cukar, Roseville, CA
Gloria Day, Covelo, CA
Donald H. Garibaldi, Stockton, CA
Dr. Harry Gay, Stockton, CA
Flora Giannecchini, Stockton, CA
Tim Hatten, Oakland, CA
Adrian Janoska, Ironwood, MI
Mark A. Jordan, Petaluma, CA
Joseph Lombardi, Daly City, CA
Martha Loughridge, San Francisco, CA
Jim Martini, Santa Rosa, CA
Diane Paige, San Ramon, CA
Arlene Pettet, Calistoga, CA
Armando Quaglia, Redwood City, CA
Michael Sanossian, Oakland, CA
Eva Marie Sbragia, Alameda, CA
Diane Smith, Grass Valley, CA
Doris Sprugasci, Greenfield, CA
Max Tarmann, Menlo Park, CA
Dale E. Wise, McLean, VA
Fuqi Ying, San Francisco, CA

We're delighted to have you join us! Please introduce yourselves to Board members at meetings and feel free to call any of us at any time. We want to hear from you. Welcome!

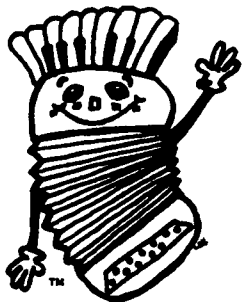
Kil Accordion Club

Ernie Lantz has kindly provided some data about the Kil Accordion Club which played at our last meeting. Members are Lars Hell, Goran Ashlund, Per-Olof Ashlund, Anne-Marie Karlsson, Carina Andersson, Lars Hallin, Leif Cato, Stig Johansson, and Christer Falkenstrom.

The selections they played were: We Come From Varmland, Spiskroksvalsen, Noassnoa, Lordagsvalsen (Saturday Nite Waltz), Ganglat from Hogdal, and Vid Hemsjon, composed by Ingemar Lundell. Their mailing address is: Kil Dragspel Club. Christer Falkenstrom, Villa Gatan 1, BV 120, S-66520 Fageras Sweden.

**Contact Phone #s for
Officers and Board Members:**

Pres:	Bob Berta	(415) 756-8309
V.P.	Joe Smiell	(510) 832-6938
Treas.	Algis Ratnikas	(415) 587-9910
Record.Sect.	Val Kieser	(510) 531-4836
Finan. Sect.	Frank Montoro	(415) 574-4757
	Mary-Alice Eldon	(415) 366-7819
	Marian Kelly	(415) 854-1896
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BAAC 1995-96 BUDGET

INCOME

Advertising Newsletter	\$900
Cassette Sales	\$1,923
Concerts	\$400
Donations	\$200
Door Fees	\$2,800
Guest Artist Add'l Fees	\$400
Fund Raisers	\$400
Membership Dues	\$6,000
Membership (6 mos.)	\$100
Misc. Income (Membership List)	\$100
Picnic	\$1,000
Savings (Interest)	\$85
TOTAL INCOME	\$14,308

EXPENSES

Bank Charges	\$20
Bob Berta	\$100
Cassette Sales	\$1,587
Concerts	
Jack London, Anchorage	\$250
Cotati	\$500
Gifts	\$400
AAA	
Guest Artists	\$1,000
Hardware	\$100
Insurance	\$710
Marian Kelly	
Admin-BAAC	\$200
Admin-Phone	\$20
Cotati-Phone	\$50
Editor	\$1,500
Newsletter Mail	\$1,440
Newsletter Print	\$1,700
Newsletter Production	\$950
Membership List	\$40
Membership % F. Montoro	\$300
Membership in other orgs.	\$30
SF Folk Music Club	
Amer. Accord. Assoc	
Misc. Expenses	\$326
McClelland (picnic items)	
Saso, Panacci, Massolo (Xmas)	
Ratnikas (copy/nom. committee)	
Di Bono (copy)	
Picnic	\$400
Rent (Donworth Hall)	\$1,320
Tax Fees	\$25
Telephone Voice Mail	\$240
Telephone Officers	\$100
Travel	\$1,000
Total Expenses	\$14,308

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Marian Kelly
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NEXT MEETING: MONDAY
November 6, 1995
7:00 PM

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