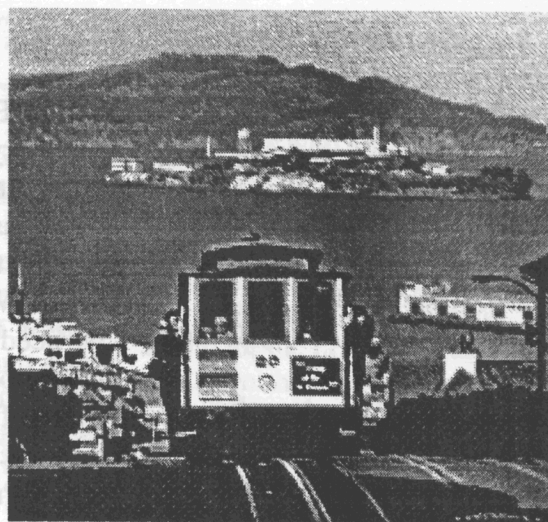


NEWSLETTER OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO
**BAY AREA
ACCORDION CLUB**



EDITORS: Marian Kelly
Dominic Palmisano

September, 1993

September General Meeting

Our September meeting was held on August 30 due to the Labor Day weekend. Also the meeting came on the day after the Cotati Accordion Festival. Although it appeared that some of us were dragging a little, we all perked up once the music started... But before getting under way, **Frank Panacci** donated 2 music chairs, and **Chuck Hamilton** donated **Dino Benetti's** personal playing chair. Also, it was announced that **Reno Pucci** will be taking over the club's **Music Library** (415-588-4351). Reno plans to upgrade our current inventory, so give him a call... Finally, **Faith Deffner**, who is the east coast distributor for Titano and Pancordion, was introduced and told us a bit about herself and her company.

Where's The Music?

Our MC **Domenic Saso** opened the entertainment with his student **Blake Parker**. With charm and enthusiasm Blake played two old favorites, *Lady of Spain* and *La Spagnola*. There is always a great feeling at a meeting when we hear a good young player! Next, new board members **Frank Panacci** and **Ed Massolo** got the crowd into second gear with a spirited rendition of *El Pies Drive*, *Petite Waltz*,

Carnival of Venice and *Peanuts Polka*. These guys can jump-start any evening when they get together and play... Then **Joe Smiell** stepped on stage with a button box and delighted the crowd with *Landler*, *Rememberances* and *Burgettstown Polka*.. Joe is currently holding an intensive 6-day diatonic accordion seminar for 30 participants at Lake Donner, California. (For details call 510-832-6938)

After intermission **Sev García** demonstrated how to use a computer with an accordion. The audience was able to see a display of all the various parts of a composition on a very large TV screen. Sev not only showed his tremendous skills in the high-tech area, but he really got our attention with his fine playing! The musical selections chosen for his presentation included *Helena Polka*, *Accordion Boogie*, *The Marriage of Figaro Overture* and for this BAAC meeting a specially sequenced *Tarantella* arranged by G. Balsamo. During his presentation many questions were asked about the ins and outs of producing such a great sound. The night concluded with a rousing ovation for **Sev García**.

The after hours at **Lyon's of Westlake** had the usual gang chatting and also being serenaded by everyone's buddy, **Clyde**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

September 22, Wednesday. BAAC Board Meeting at Marian Kelly's. 7:30. For directions, call 415-854-1896.

October 1,2,3. Festa Italiana at Fisherman's Wharf. We need strolling players all days. A few dollars available for willing accordionists. Call Dominic at 415-587-4495.

October 4, Monday. BAAC General Meeting, 7 p.m., House of Parties, Daly City.

October 16, Saturday. Barbara Ann Martindale concert at St. Philip's Anglican Church, 3737 W. 27th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. (Barbara Ann's parish). Tickets \$6.00 CAN.

October 20, Wednesday. BAAC Board Meeting, Frank Montoro's in San Mateo, 7:30. Guests welcome. 415-574-4757.

October 23 & 24, Sat/Sun. San Francisco Accordion Festival at Anchorage Shopping Center. Bring your accordions and stroll or jam. See article on p. 7.

November 1, Monday. BAAC General Meeting, 7 p.m.

November 14th, Sunday. Lou Fanucchi and Anthony Galla-Rini joint concert. San Diego Citadel Community Hall, 4170 Balboa Ave., Claremont, CA. Admission \$8.00.



Sept. Gen'l Mtng, cont.

Forsman. Clyde loves to play all kinds of ethnic songs, but his forte is Scandinavian tunes. He also prides himself on being one of the original Those Darn Accordions! and spends his spare time helping other accordion players with their minor repair needs.

See you at the next meeting, October fourth.

Josephine Hornbrook



Send Letters to the Editor, news of where you are playing, or any other message, picture, or news item to:

Marian Kelly
31 Aliso Way
Portola Valley, CA 94028

Deadline for each issue is the *second* Monday of the month. We welcome your ideas!!!

President's Column

The Executive Board of Directors was very busy in August establishing committees for our club. The days when just a couple of key people were enough to keep us moving forward are over. We've grown to the level where we need a considerable amount of participation from many people to guarantee our future success. These committees include Administrative, Promotional, Program, Events, Newsletter and Financial. Each committee will be chaired by a board member, but we greatly need other, non-Board persons to step forward to help on these committees. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please call me (415-587-4495).

I am delighted to announce that we have been fortunate to add two fine new board members, Frank Panacci and Ed Massolo. The addition of Frank and Ed is happening just at the right time.

The Anthony Galla-Rini Tribute was a huge success due to the many people who helped put the evening together. A special thank you goes to Peter DiBono who masterminded the event and saw to its every detail. We're looking forward to Peter's participation in the upcoming winter concert.

The Board has decided to look into the possibility of purchasing a sound system for the club. Over the past three years our needs have grown to justify the expense. Bob Delgado has volunteered to research what equipment will satisfy our needs.

Are we still looking for a new home for our monthly meetings? Yes! Have we found a new facility? Not quite... The finding of a new location is one of the major projects for the coming '93/'94 year. The Board will be meeting on September 22 to form a committee to continue the hunt.

Dominic Palmisano

*August Board Meeting**Synopsis*

- Paid up members for '93-94 total 143. Marian will include a notice in the August newsletters of those approximately 70 members who have not yet paid current dues. There will be a second notice in the September newsletter, after which delinquent members will be dropped from the newsletter mailing list.
- Frank Montoro, Treasurer, reports bank balances of \$4885 and \$1214 in the checking and savings accounts, respectively.
- The Treasurer reports that BAAC lost \$235 at the August 2nd Galla-Rini tribute, according to last count. The Board regards that as a wonderful success, as it had never been the Club's intention to turn a profit there. President Dominic Palmisano will purchase and present to Peter Di Bono a bottle of good red wine at the next general meeting with the Club's thanks for a first class organization job at that event. The Board will send formal thanks to Jörgen Sundeqvist for his much appreciated participation.
- A tentative list of probable committees with descriptions of their duties was circulated, and comments on the list were requested. Each board member will be expected to chair at least one committee, working with other non-Board members, and reporting monthly to the Board on that committee's activities. The chairpersons will be put in place at the September Board meeting.
- At the September meeting, Algis Ratnikas will circulate a sheet requesting that members check their areas of interest so that we may identify a few more willing hands for help with committees.
- The Club will actively solicit opportunities where groups of members can play. Monies earned will be split 50/50 between the players and the BAAC Performance Fund.
- In a telephone vote two weeks after the August meeting, Board members passed a motion to name Frank Panacci and Ed Massolo to the two vacant Board positions.

COTATI NIGHTS

BY PAUL MAGISTRETTI

The COTATI ACCORDION FESTIVAL must have been a success. Just eyeballing the numbers of people and the dust raised by enthusiastic and semi-sober dancers, I would say twice as many people came as last year. Others will probably comment on the array of talent that appeared during the day. To my ear, each artist in his own way represented beautifully the artistic range of the instrument.

An added attraction of the Festival for a lot of us is the chance to meet and get to know other accordionists. Accordionists have often been lonely beasts furtively appearing at gigs, then being swallowed up by the night. Even sidemen have been known to ditch us as we struggle along with our forty pound burden. To counteract this plight some of us try to prolong the camaraderie of the day. Presently, there seems to be two groups. Some fox trot over to Volpi's in Petaluma and others lumber to the Green Oaks in Cotati. The attraction in both places is accordion playing and a shortening of long nights with warm reeds.

At the Green Oaks, Spiro finally came through with his banquet room, the nice, large private room he teased us with in years past. And it was great to have the intimacy and quiet necessary to fully enjoy our fatal instrument in all its acoustic splendor. God may love the accordion, but the Festival's mikes, amps, and technicians are less benign. To be fair, the complex overtones and full range of expression of the instrument are hard to capture, even in controlled circumstances and especially on recordings. A recent CD by Christine Rossi has achieved the best sound I've heard so far – and even there, there's a wheeze and groan I know didn't exist in vivendi.

But Spiro's room wasn't bad. And the playing was marvelous.

The first night, Lou Soper, who was instrumental in securing Peter Soave for the Festival – for which we all sincerely thank him – warmed up the room in his own inimitable way. I don't think there's a chord in the musical canon of Western Civilization that this man doesn't know and play – and sometimes all in one song. Just kidding, Lou. Nice playing and we enjoyed your "Here's that Rainy Day" and "Over the Rainbow."

Bob Delgado found an unattended accordion and before anyone could stop him he was joy riding through some classic accordion pieces espagnol. "Malaguena" was just one example. Bob's a flat out good player and he never has to be coaxed. He likes sharing his music; we like listening.

Next, Peter Soave played. He's fantastic. For many of us, he was a big surprise and the hit of the Festival. He did several classical numbers, including a beautifully played Scarlatti sonata. I don't think I've heard anyone with as much feeling for Scarlatti as Peter has – on any instrument. He plays with such utter clarity and passion that the life of the music, its sheer joy and melodic vitality burst through – he

makes it fresh, new, it's happening now, the same way great jazz happens. Too many superb technicians have killed classical music with false reverence and intellectual, sterile performances. Such people make listening a chore. Scarlatti (like Bach) has often sounded like finger exercises. But Peter has a genuine gift that makes whatever he plays "happen again, for the first time," as Yogi Berra said. On the lighter side, Peter played several French musette pieces, along with "Moscow Nights" and a touching "Parla mi d'amore, Mariu."

Art Van Damme, the Godfather of the accordion, was in attendance both nights. Peter paid a warm tribute to this great and influential artist. Peter said that even though he plays primarily classical music, he was influenced by Art's free, spontaneous and always deeply felt artistry. Peter aspires to that kind of feeling and sincerity in his own work. He was grateful to Art for showing the way.

A few of us lingered at the end of the first night and wondered if we could do it all again. "Why not?" Peter Soave said.

Both nights we had about fifty people providing a warm, attentive audience. But on Sunday night the performers were really there for each other and Art. We



ART VAN DAMME, FRANK MAROCCO, PETER SOAVE, KEN OLENDORF

Cotati Nights, Cont.

went along for the ride.

Peter Di Bono got the evening started. Peter just keeps improving. His Scarlatti and Bach during the Festival were excellent. Sunday he started out with a beautiful Italian song Gigli introduced in the thirties, "Non Ti Scorder Di Me." He had Faithe Deffner (who owns Titano and Pancordion) blown away, "so sensitive, so talented," she said. Peter moved on to fine renditions of "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life," some blues, and a nice jazz version of "Satin Doll."

"Who else wants to step up to the plate?" Peter asked.

Ken Olendorf strapped on an unfamiliar accordion and despite some slipping straps, he never faltered. I don't think there is a player who can play a jazz ballad better than Ken. As he improvises on a song, it takes on a life of its own. It becomes like some kind of natural force, plants growing in a garden, trees in a forest; he takes you on an emotional trip and each chorus builds with a beautiful sense of the song's meaning. He's never abstract. There are no tired jazz clichés. Even in the most complex moments you experience the song's intent and almost hear the words. He has a wonderful melodic sense of where he's going and where he's been and he always envelopes the listener in the journey. He has a special feeling for Cole Porter and that came through on "I've Got You Under My Skin" and "Night and Day."

Peter Soave was next.

Peter began with a powerful Prelude and Aria from a suite by Georgij Shenderev who passed away just a few years ago. The music was brooding and emotional and you'd have to be a stone not to weep at its slavic pathos and the way Peter played it. For those of us who haven't been exposed to the bayan repertoire played by an artist like Peter, the music is a revelation, full of beautiful melody and dark harmonies, a vista opening on the human soul in all its pain and - given Russia's history and predilec-

tion for weltschmerz, more pain (yet, here and there are bursts of joy and tenderness you'll find in no other music). Peter really masters this kind of material which is both technically complex, and even more complex emotionally. He mentioned that he only came across the music for this suite recently. He had previously heard it in competition in Europe. And by way of a side note mentioned that a lot of the hard-to-find European music can be gotten through Faithe Deffner in NY. Next, Peter played a French musette piece by Astier. It was the first piece he learned on the chromatic accordion thirteen years ago when he switched from the piano keyboard. He's been playing accordion roughly twenty years. The musette was a little jewel. You had to like what Peter did with it, even if you had been to Paris and had been insulted by the French a lot, maybe even if you had been short changed at the Louvre and cheated when buying a train ticket at Gare d'Austerlitz. Or perhaps cursed at by a petit grisette in a doorway with offerings of things the French are only supposed to know about. Mais oui, everybody knows these things. But the French know how. Ah, reverie de Paris, days and nights of vin ordinaire and people to match. It makes you count the hours before returning as quickly as possible to the USA where the ambiance is simple violence instead of complicated sex. Maybe musette music, especially as Peter plays it, is the way to practice safe French culture. Peter concluded with the Leyenda from Isaac Albeniz' "Suite Espagnole" which was written originally by the great Catalonian pianist/composer for the piano. Most of us are familiar with the piece

from Segovia's transcription for the guitar. It's great music - energetic, moody, full of internal fire; it has a kind of frantic energy and passion that

from Segovia's transcription for the guitar. It's great music - energetic, moody, full of internal fire; it has a kind of frantic energy and passion that

makes you feel brazen, tempestuous, fatalistic. And Peter was full of those self-same passions. It was a brilliant performance.



Peter Soave

Last up was Frank Marocco. Frank has to know every standard ever written and in fact played whatever was shouted at him from the audience. And he swings! And swings with great feeling, insight, and heart. When you listen to Frank, it's like watching a great movie musical; it's that kind of varied and happy experience. He opened with a beautiful and touching "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes," very heartfelt and soaring with that kind of sustained lyrical rubato



Joe Smiell

Cotati Nights, Cont.

playing we hear too little of on the accordion. Then, he immediately started swinging with "I'm Beginning to See the Light" and "They Can't Take That Away From Me." He only stopped briefly to pay a nice tribute to Art Van Damme whom he first heard in Chicago on the radio when Art performed on the Maxwell House Coffee Hour. Frank said Art's playing made him find his own musical vocation and voice and kept him in music. Then, to prove his lessons from Art were well learned, Frank launched into "Cheek to Cheek" which I think he really owns. I've heard him do this several times, and it's like a montage of the best parts of an Astaire/Rogers film. This time, however, he confessed to stealing an ending from Art. But the rest was pure Marocco. He did some requests, including "My One and Only Love," an old tune Joe Venuti used to break your heart with on the violin and "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square." He climaxed his set with his jazz/waltz arrangement of "My Favorite Things", and if the Von Trapps were never hip, they are now.

Then in the tradition of the old days of Fifty-Second Street when jazz musicians would finish their gigs then get together somewhere and improvise with each other, Peter Soave joined Frank and they began "Girl From Ipanema" and played it back and forth from solo to solo, with Frank supplying a driving powerful bass line that was just amaz-



Marian Kelly, Peter Di Bono

ing. Ken Olendorf had time to go to his car and get his own instrument and return and join them on the same tune, adding his own incredible solo voice. Then, they all played back and forth, like a jazz fugue, each voice clear, distinct, sparkling. I thought of the great old days of JATP concerts when the soloists bounced off each other and found things together they'd never find alone. For an encore, the three artists took off on "Blusette" and the little babe never fared better for all the passing around she's experienced, a lot better than that archetypal griste de Paris with too much rouge and a European prejudice against shaving her legs.

The evening ended with flashing cameras and a good, full, happy feeling that we'd witnessed some of the very best accordion playing ever; that we had had the privilege of seeing fine players play for, to, and with each other at the very highest level.

Jörgen Needs Photos

Jörgen Sundeqvist writes that he is back to normal in Sweden after his US tour. He plans to write an article about his tour for the magazine published by the Swedish Accordion Association and, he says, especially about the event in San Francisco. However, he has "very few and bad photos". Would we, he says, have any photos from the Galla-Rini gala? If so, please send them to:

Jörgen Sundeqvist
Violinvägen 10
890 10 Bjästa, Sweden

He would especially appreciate photos of Galla-Rini, Lou Fanucchi, and himself.

(Postage for the first ounce to Sweden is \$.50; for the next 1/2 oz, another \$.45 cents. For subsequent half-ounces, the postage changes.)



**ONE TUNE THEY MAY NOT PLAY:
THE 'SHE'S TOO FAT FOR ME' POLKA**

What's the best way for a group of feminist accordion players to finance a trip to Beijing? Why, by playing "Women of Spain" at street corners, of course.

The new California musical ensemble, calling itself the Gospel Accordion to Women, hopes to raise \$15,000 to help gets its 12 members to the United Nations Women's Conference in China in 1995. But its statement of purpose says it also wants to break the "glass ceiling" for women accordion players and wage peace by beating guns into accordions.

The idea was born at last month's National Women's Political Caucus in Los Angeles, where more than 1,000 people reviewed ways to increase women's influence in government. Nancy DeStefanis, executive director of Women Are Good News, a group supporting women in the media, had recently begun playing the instrument. At a luncheon, her accordion pin prompted talk about the good a politicized women's accordion group could do. Before long, Gospel members were greeting each other with a secret sign: hands squeezing together, accordion style.

Ms. DeStefanis says the group - now including a real-estate broker, a psychologist, and a Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. lawyer - was inspired by Those Darn Accordions!, a San Francisco group that successfully lobbied to make the accordion the city's official instrument.

Before taking their act to the streets (where they'll alter the name of the accordion standard "Lady of Spain"), they will appear at a November women's conference in Long Beach. (For most members, that means learning to play the instrument - in a hurry.) They'll also sell bumper stickers that say, "I'm Pro-Accordion and I Vote."

Lee Bright, president of Bright Marketing International in Long Beach and a member of the group, says, "The whole idea is absolutely crazy, but that's the problem with this country: we all take ourselves too seriously."

Once in China, they'll find nonmusical ways to lobby on such subjects as women's health and domestic violence. But they're also looking forward to jam sessions with Beijing's women accordion players. (A Chinese instrument called the sheng was a forerunner of the modern accordion.)

As for Gospel's street performing, what are the money-raising prospects of a bunch of novice accordion players? Good, says Ms. DeStefanis: "We'll play until people pay us to stop."

The above article was found in the *Wall Street Journal*, August 18, 1993

Reprinted without editorial comment (thank goodness, we hear you say!)

Who's Playing??

October 11th, Monday. Peter Di Bono with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in *Tango*, an opera in one act for tenor and Chamber Ensemble by Robert Xavier Rodriguez. Herbst Theater, 8 P.M. Call 415-252-6235 for tickets.

NEW MEMBERS

It's been several months since we have welcomed new members; therefore we have a fine long list!

- David Best, Petaluma
- Dave Burnham, Stockton
- Phil Chiodo, Walnut Creek
- Faith Deffner, Mineola, N.Y.
- Guido DeVincenzi, San Francisco
- Bill Drude, Pacifica
- Albert J. Gianni, Concord
- Julio Giulietti, Westfield, MA
- John Gonzales, San Francisco
- Emil Horwath, Yuba City
- A.J. Intintoli, Vallejo
- Jana Maas, Modesto
- Nora Mazzara, Mtn. View
- Glenn McClelland, Campbell
- Cal Mock, Vacaville
- Ruth Peckham, Davis
- Nancy Pettet, Carmel
- Mark Ramian, Redwood City
- Paul Sanchez, Salinas
- Jonas Sousa, Petaluma
- James Taylor, Chico
- Lino Tunzi, Greenfield

We're delighted to have you with us. We hope to see and meet you at meetings or events and we hope to hear your opinions and ideas.

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The San Francisco Accordion Festival

...BE THERE!!!

Don't miss the Accordion Festival on October 23rd and 24th at Anchorage Shopping Center near Fisherman's Wharf! The Festival is being revamped this year by Patrice Metzler, whom the Center has hired to put together and promote the extravaganza. Patrice invites all BAAC members to bring accordions to the center on either day, where we are invited either to jam together near the fountain on Anchorage Lane (between the two Anchorage buildings, running from Jefferson to Beach Sts) or to stroll nearby, entertaining the crowds and encouraging them to come for the festivities. Dominic Palmisano is organizing (415-587-4495).

She also strongly encourages each of us to enter this year's contest, which will be quite unlike last year's. We quote from their press release: "Accordion players

of all ages and musical persuasions are invited to strut their stuff at the "I'm San Francisco's Main Squeeze" contest. The competition is part of the Third Annual San Francisco International Accordion Festival, scheduled for October 23rd and 24th at the Anchorage Shopping Center, on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. Contest registration blanks are available by mail or fax. Call 415-775-6000. The two day festival is a benefit for the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association.

Qualifying Rounds open to all pre-registered accordionists will be held on stage at 2:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Finalists compete Sunday, October 24th at 1:45 p.m. for First, Second, and third place, before a distinguished panel of judges that includes Lou Levin, publisher of Key Magazine, Bob McLeod, director of photography for the San Francisco Examiner,

KCBS reporter Mike Sugarman, and KFOG evening deejay John Grapone.

Participants will be scored on: Crowd Appeal, Accordion Playing, Most Amazing Polka Costume, and explanations of why they should be "San Francisco's Main Squeeze".

Prizes include: an "I'm San Francisco's Main Squeeze" sweatshirt, gift certificates, dinner and lunch for two courtesy of Houlihan's at the Anchorage and Cafe Espresso, an Avis rental car, tickets to Beach Blanket Babylon, Red and White Bay Cruise tickets, and a cable car music box trophy, courtesy of Cable Car Music."

Now think about it, everybody. We need a few novel ideas. Let's find an Amazing Polka Costume for Lou. Or, how ow about Dominic and Cindy as a Polka team???

DO YOU PLAY A MIDI ACCORDION? DO HAVE AN INTEREST IN LEARNING ABOUT MIDI?

At the last meeting on August 30, we were treated to a fine MIDI demonstration by Sev Garcia of Porterville. Several members including myself spoke with Sev concerning the number of members who are interested in MIDI. Since we don't really have a list of BAAC MIDI accordion players, Sev and I thought that it might be worthwhile to get out a survey. Once this information is tabulated, Sev and I will see if we can schedule some sort of get together either after a meeting or on a different day.

If you have **any** interest in MIDI accordions, please fill out the attached form and return it to me.

Bob Berta, #4 Park Manor Dr., Daly City, CA 94015

NAME: _____	I HAVE PLAYED ACCORDION FOR ____ YEARS.
ADDRESS: _____	I HAVE PLAYED <i>MIDI</i> ACCORDION FOR ____ YEARS.
CITY, ZIP: _____	I DON'T CURRENTLY HAVE A MIDI SETUP BUT I AM INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE SOME DAY (Y/N) ____
PHONE: _____	I DON'T INTEND TO GET INTO MIDI BUT AM CURIOUS & WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IT. (Y/N) ____
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