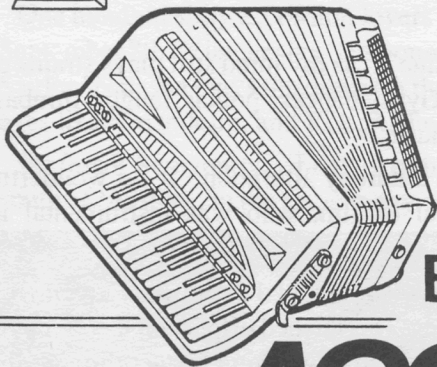


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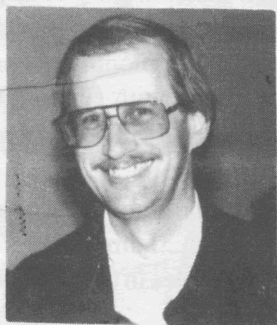
# ACCORDION CLUB

SEPTEMBER, 1997



## President's Message

by Bob Berta



With heavy heart I am leaving my post as President of BAAC. My two-year term is at its end. I have enjoyed working with the rest of the board and membership to continue to keep the club at world class status. A special thanks to all those who supported me and the board in our efforts. There were a few times that we may have missed the boat, but overall I feel that the club has done extremely well and we have learned from our failures.

I look back on the things we have accomplished and also those areas that we still have room to grow. I am constantly amazed at the level of artists we attract from throughout the world. One of my most pleasurable duties is to get to meet these wonderful talented people. But equally as satisfying is meeting all of the members of our club. We have some truly amazing members who have a common bond...love for the accordion. But as I get to know these people I enjoy learning all about them...not just their accordion interests.

I also want to give special attention to all those hard working volunteers. I won't mention names for fear of leaving out someone. But you know who you are...those members who always get to the meetings early to help setup chairs, open the hall, serve refreshments, etc. Also a special thanks to those members who work at the various public events either playing or working in information booths. And of course those tireless conductors Joe Smiell and Domenic Saso who keep our Fun Band and BAAC Band going. Frankly I feel that anybody who is not in one of these two groups is missing out on a golden opportunity.

Looking back, though, I would have to ask myself: "What was the most satisfying thing I remember?" The answer to this lies in the REAL reason for our club. It is not entertainment (although that is certainly wonderful). It is increased awareness of the accordion and promotion of the accordion. Even more important are the requirements that go along with our tax-exempt status. We must provide a benefit

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Oct. 1st, Wed.** BAAC Ensemble Practice, Moose Lodge, Daly City. Call Joe, (510) 832-6838.

**Oct. 6th., Monday.** BAAC General Meeting featuring the Norwegian folk group, Dehli & Knerten Band and a workshop at 9P on Stage Fright by Sev Garcia. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F. just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7 PM.

**Oct. 8th, Wed.** BAAC Board Meeting 7:30 PM at Ed Massolo's, 612 Lassen, So. S.F. 7:30 P.M. Guests Welcome.

**Oct 9 - 12th.** International Accordion Competitions in the city of Castelfidardo, Italy. MANY categories for groups and soloists. Tel. 39/71/7822987.

**Oct. 22nd, Wed.** (and every fourth Wednesday), BAAC Fun Band. Moose Lodge, Daly City. Call Domenic, 587-7557

**October 26th, Sunday.** BAAC Annual Dinner at the Irish Cultural Center. Y'all Come! See p. 6.

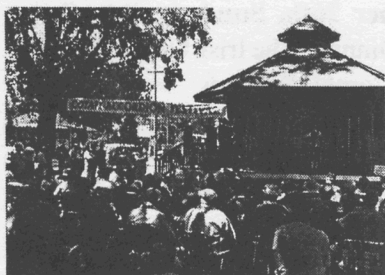
**December 15.** Annual Accordion Club of the Redwoods dinner and December meeting. Volpi's Restaurant, Petaluma.

## Coming Up at BAAC's October General Meeting:

The October meeting will feature a visiting Norwegian folk band, the Dehli & Knerten Band, and a workshop by Sev Garcia. Sev will also perform in a short set during the first part of the meeting utilizing his MIDI "orchestra" to backup his fine acoustic accordion abilities. A couple club artists will fill out the first portion of the meeting. Next the Norwegian group will take the stage. I understand that they are one of the top bands in Norway. Their President, Sigmund Dehli is a Norwegian accordion champion. Eddy Knerten Lyshaug, 20, is a champion on the Norwegian two-row button accordion. Others in the group play fiddle, bass and drums. If you enjoy Norwegian folk dancing you are encouraged to bring your dancing shoes and treat the rest of the audience to some fine footwork.

The meeting will not have a mid-meeting intermission. Instead, the meeting will end at 8:45 P.M and will be followed by a 15-minute break. Sev Garcia has volunteered to remain after the meeting to present a special workshop called "Overcoming Stage Fright:" beginning at 9:00 P.M. If you are like 99.9% of us, the thought of getting up in front of a group of people and performing....or even speaking....sends shivers up your spine and beads of cold sweat pouring down your face. Sev has refined this special workshop over the past few years and those who have attended it previously have been very enthusiastic. The workshop will run until about 10 P.M.

*Bob Berta*



## COTATI ----Walking on Sunshine

*by Don Larson*

Friends and Squeezers:

Oh my...I'm still "walking on sunshine"... as my mind still plays strains of accordion music — Italian ballads, Russian Gypsy dances, polkas, tangos, rumbas, waltzes, mazurkas, and much more dance music.

The State of Jim Boggio was unveiled on Saturday afternoon. It's a wonderful addition to the park and a great memorial of Jim, who was instrumental in establishing this annual accordion festival.

Dick Contino (a California native, born in Fresno) graced the festival green with his Italian/Improv blend of accordion favorites. He finished off his Sunday Set with a spirit rallying patriotic medley. I spent some time watching his act through the wings from back stage, (as close as they allowed the "non-press, non-performer" type to get). Being a very muscular 67 year old, he puts his biceps and back muscles to good use in his expressive bellows shaking.

Those Darn Accordions!, fresh back from their trip to Summerfest in Milwaukee were clearly influenced by the Wisconsin Polka Scene as they played us the best rendition of Beer Barrel Polka I've heard in a long time! In addition, their selection from the band, "The Who" was out of this world.

Steve Balich's polka band played two days of dance music in a blue and white polka tent. We danced both days on a beautiful sprung oak wood dance floor. That is Heaven. We danced and conversed with several "polka scene" friends. One friend, Rita, was very glad to meet Susan's and my baby boy, Christian, 7 months old on Sunday, and Hal even got a chance to dance the Chicken Dance with Christian, Susan, and myself.

Maggie's band, Polkacide (BAAC member Maggie Martin from Petaluma) was at the festival, but we arrived just as they were finishing their set on Sunday. Great clothing, guys and gals...but about that guy with the lederhosen...ah...I think Maggie better raise his clothing allowance, cuz Susan spotted quite a few holes in them. (Just what she was doing checking that out is beyond me.)

There were many more bands and acts there, all good. (Great "Gumbo" band from Louisiana, for instance). I was particularly impressed with a band which played what sounded like Russian Gypsy music. The woman on fiddle was phenomenal.



## September Meeting

by Marian Kelly

One hundred sixty accordion lovers were treated to some of the finest accordion playing to be heard anywhere on Monday, September 8th. Viatcheslav Semyonov, one of the all-time masters, was on hand with his wife Natasha and his student, Robert Sattler. Natasha plays the domra, a three-stringed lute-like folk instrument, cousin to the balalaika, which looks to American eyes like a mandolin, and Robert plays a bayan similar to that of his mentor.

Professor Semyonov, who may rightly be called the founder of the modern school of the bayan, was born about 300 miles south of Moscow, in the ancient city of Trubchevsk. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, he began to play the bayan at the age of 7, studying at first with his father, and later in Moscow. His international career began when he was 21 when he participated in competitions in Klingenthal, Germany in 1967 and Sofia, Bulgaria in 1968. In 1977 he was awarded the title "Honored Artist of Russia; in 1983 he was granted the degree of Professor; in 1995 the highest possible honour "People's Artist of Russia" by President Boris Yeltsin. He is a teacher, composer, and performer around the world. It was an honor to host him this evening.



*Robert Sattler*

The program for the evening went as follows; Robert Sattler opened with "Devotion", an homage to Astor Piazzolla by Prof. Semyonov, then performed two Scarlatti sonatas, one in C minor and one in E major. He completed his section of the program with a rendition of his mentor's lovely "Kalina Krasnaya".

Robert then introduced Professor Semyonov (Slava), who continued the program with his "Don Rhapsody", then his own arrangement of a gorgeous Rachmaninoff piece, "Vocalise", and closed with another of his own compositions, "Brahmsiana", taken from the works of Johannes Brahms.

After intermission Prof. Semyonov introduced his wife, Natasha. Together they played "Concert Variations on a Russian Theme" by Ditel, then Gliere's "Romance", and completed the set with "Otrada" (Joy) by V. Chernikov.

Then Robert Sattler joined Natasha for "Coachman" by Y. Derbenko, and Robert and Slava played a duet, "Russian Snowstorm" by A. Shalayev.

There was still more to come of Duo Semyonov, and these pieces were wonderful crowd pleasers: "Fantasy on Melodies of Two Russian Romances" by V. Gorodovskaya; "La Paloma", arranged by A. Tzigankov; "Smiling Jack's Ranch" by S. Tikhonov; and the traditional "Brightly Shines the Moon". We are all relatively familiar with the bayan, but the combination of bayan and domra was new to most members, and the facility with which Natasha brought rapid, expressive music from her small instrument astounded and delighted everyone. Duo Semyonov works beautifully.....each of them seems to sense exactly

when the other will strike a note, so that they are able to sound like a single, complex instrument.

Following all this, our guests greeted and talked with meeting attendees for at least half an hour. During that time, many members took advantage of the opportunity to purchase their CD's, including one by Robert Sattler, one by Duo Semyonov, and the solo CD by Prof. Semyonov which was reviewed in last month's newsletter. They greatly appreciated selling 45 CD's, since, as they said, that income really helps with travel costs. (They told me they have spent \$3500 this year on travel expenses.) They send their thanks for your support.

It was quite an evening!

It was also election night. When they came in the door, BAAC members were given a ballot. Results were tallied after the short intermission. See report on p. 6.



*Natasha and Viatcheslav Semyonov*

*President's Column, cont.*

for the public at large. Yes, we have promoted the accordion to the public at large. But there are many opportunities to do even more.

A couple years ago I was Christmas shopping at my local center when I heard a holiday tune being played on an accordion. I saw that the source of the music was Reno Pucci who was strolling around the shopping center playing for the crowd. I went over and said hello. As we talked a couple of young black boys about 12 years old came up and were really taken with the accordion. They wanted to know how it worked, did it use batteries, what was it called, if you could take lessons on it and so on. As they walked away, I could overhear them saying that the accordion was "awesome" and they would love to be able to play it for their friends. Their excitement was obvious and I like to imagine that they went home and pestered their parents into letting them learn how to play it just as I did when I was a child of 8.

But the most memorable moment for me was at the Cotati Festival this year. A young man about 11 came to the booth and overheard somebody asking how to play the little Chinese diatonic accordions we had for sale. The young man picked one from the display and volunteered to show how to play it. He promptly played a couple tunes. When questioned how he learned to play it he replied that his parents bought him one from BAAC at last year's event and after he could play it, he had talked his parents into getting a larger diatonic accordion and is taking lessons. To me that was a success story and one we need to promote more of. We sold 77 of those little accordions this year, mostly to children. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a few of those children go on to learn to play a larger instrument now that the spark has been struck?

All of us get old and pass away. The future of the accordion should not pass away with our own passing.

**BAAC Board Meeting  
Synopsis**

- Treasurer reports \$6832 in our combined accounts.
- BAAC's booth at the Cotati Festival sold 77 small "Hero" accordions and conducted a highly successful raffle. Total booth income was \$1158. If you count our annual \$500 contribution to the Festival (which pays for our booth space, the Jam Tent and an ad in the program), we still netted \$600. Great job, Herb Meier!!!
- Discussion of our 10/26 dinner and which members to honor at that time was held.

**Last Call**

**for Twenty Dollar Dues**

Dear Members: Have you paid your dues yet? (Many of you have.) For those of you who tend to procrastinate just a little bit...your dues can still be at the old \$20 rate until October 1. After that date, the rate increases to \$25. So please send along that renewal to BAAC at our address on the back of this newsletter. Find a form to enclose with payment in the August newsletter. Thank you!

***Calendar of Events, cont.***

**March 20 - 22, '98.** Texas Accordion Association Convention, Plano, Texas. Call Norman Seaton, (972) 270-3791.

**June 19-21, '98.** CAPA (Closet Accordion Players of America) convention in Denver. Organizer Cheri Thurston is encouraging early registration of \$30. Send to CAPA, 305 W. Magnolia, S. 398, Fort Collins, CO 80525.

*Please send Calendar Information to Your Editor, using the address on the last page. Thank you. -*

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## A PLUM

A CD Review by Paul Magistretti

We're so familiar with Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker in its two major forms: the ubiquitous ballet and the companion orchestral suite (extracted from the ballet) that we sometimes no longer really hear it. In fact, around the Holiday season it inundates Malls, elevators, TV and radio until it seems part of the atomic structure of the air. By January, the notes lay like black squiggles on our cortical tissue, but not in our hearts. How could anyone possibly make it new again? Well, there is a solo piano transcription, so maybe we might find a virtuoso keyboard player somewhere who could pour it back into our souls.

Stanislav Venglevsky has performed a wonderful service. He has made the Nutcracker new again. Stas created his own transcription brilliantly combining the orchestral and piano scores and further filling out his performance with selections from the ballet that were left out of the Suite. But he gives us more than a solo rendition. The bayan, that most sophisticated of accordions, possesses the range and color of a chamber orchestra. And yet, it has the heart of a folk instrument — which is perfect. After all, the Nutcracker's movements are dances that borrow and suggest diverse folk elements, albeit through a 19th Century Russian perspective. So, we have a perfect confluence of music and medium.

And who better to present us with such an arresting artistic synthesis than a young virtuoso who understands both Tchaikovsky and the Suite's underpinnings in Russian folk music? Stas studied until he was twenty in Moldova and then attended the Russian Academy of Music in Moscow, receiving a Masters degree.

Each of the miniatures is beautifully rendered. We're on a magic journey commencing with the Overture and pro-

gressing exquisitely through the Entrance March, the Sugar Plum's tippy-toes, the Russian Trepak, Tarantella, etc. to a wonderful and heart-felt conclusion in one of the most memorable of waltzes ever written (and rarely as well performed), Waltz of the Flowers. It's all there. But it's all new again — no inconsiderable feat (as well as a fete).

Hearing Stas' CD is like seeing an old girl friend the way she was once and how you'd like her to remain forever in your dreams.

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You may order the Nutcracker directly from Stas by sending him \$ 17.00 per CD (shipping included). His address is:  
 Stas Venglevsky  
 4790 N. Sheffield  
 Whitefish Bay, WI 53211  
 (414) 962-8342

### NEW OFFICERS and BOARD MEMBERS

The seventy-five BAAC members who attended the September meeting cast ballots to choose a President and a Vice-President. Ballots were counted during the last half of the meeting, and it was announced that BAAC's new President, beginning October 1st, is Marian Kelly. Our new Vice-President is Joe Smiell. Val Kieser will again be our Secretary. The two Board positions, which were uncontested, will be filled by Frank Montoro and Sharon Walters. Congratulations and best wishes for a very successful upcoming BAAC year to all!

## Accordion Support Group for Beginners

(posted by new BAAC member Jane on the internet 8/28/97)

Having strange dreams of Squeezin'? Found IT in the attic and wanna play? Got one for your birthday and now it's time for revenge!?

At first it may look quite simple... A few keys on one side, a few buttons on the other and a vacuum pump thing in the middle....But the first Squeeze sounds more like a Donkey with the flu!

If any of this sounds familiar then..... The Bay Area Beginners Accordion Support Group is for you!

This group would be instrumental (ha) for those accordion players who feel

- they have about 3 or fewer years of experience.
- that feel they are struggling on their own
- that have just started out and need some encouragement
- that would like a supportive environment to get used to playing in front of other people (i.e. not their pets).

The group will meet the LAST THURSDAYS of the month. So our first meeting will be September 25th, 1997 at 8 PM. We will squeeze together for a few hours and then spend time talking about it all.

If this sounds interesting to you or if you know someone who may be interested in such a gathering, please call Jane at (415) 357-1297 or e-mail at cat@prolific.com. I'll give you directions, times, dates, and any other info I can think of. The actual location will be at my house (I've got space) in the SOMA area of San Francisco.

Thanx Much  
 Dreamin' of Squeezin'  
 Jane the Cat

## BellowTones Perform at Moscone

by: Ann Kona

A couple months ago I received an invitation to be an honored guest at the Informix Corporation's International Convention. What is an Informix and why are they having a convention?? The Consul General informed me that it was very important that I attend. Important to whom? Certainly not me. Worst of all, I had to go to the convention, being held at Moscone Center in San Francisco, at 8:15 A.M. Mio dio! That would mean I would have to get up at 5:00 A.M. for to do my hair, face, pick out an outfit, search endlessly for accessories, and who knows what else.

On the dreaded day of the event, Friday, July 25, the consulate limo pulled up to the front of the Convention Center and as my companion, Marco, and I emerged, we were not greeted by an escort, but rather by the sounds of the accordion. I gasped! Where was this music coming from? I turned and there in all its glory was a 14-piece accordion ensemble playing in front of the Center. Splendido! I told Marco to go and get me a latte while I walked over to see this band. I stood there amazed at the sheer size of the ensemble and the beautiful music they were playing. Suddenly, I began to cry.

The ensemble consisted of Ron Borelli, Joe Bava, Bob Delgado, Peter Di Bono, Gary Drexler, Charlie McCarthy, Herb Meier, Reno Pucci, Nina Rolle (loved the dress, dear), Boaz Rubin, Steven Shen, Joe Simoni, Dennis Stoscher, and that dreamy Tom Torriglia.

The Musical Director, Ron Borelli, launched the group into one of my favorite songs, *O Sole Mio*, and then half way through, Steven Shen came forward and began singing the song in Italian. Ah, be still my heart. It was the first time I had heard Steven, an Asian fellow, sing — let along in Italian. What a voice! Later on, an attendee of the convention and a fellow countryman also sang *O Sole Mio*. It was almost too much for me to bear.

Reno Pucci stepped forward and gave a sterling solo performance as did Joe Bava. Tom, Ron and Peter absolutely stole my heart with *Tico-Tico*. They all played so many wonderful songs. I was delirious. At one point, some attendees to the convention began doing the polka. It was incredible.

Finally, Marco appeared with my latte and informed me that the event was starting and that my presence was requested. As I walked away, Ron turned to the large cheering crowd that had gathered, thanked them all for stopping by on their way inside to the convention and then launched the ensemble into the song, *San Francisco*.

Although I still not to know what is an Informix, I do to know that the best way to start the day is with music from the accordion. BAACalaureates to all!

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## ANNUAL DINNER

### Celebrating both Incoming and Outgoing Officers and Presentation of Awards

After you've mailed your October 26th dinner reservation, you can use these two paragraphs to remind yourself of where you're headed and when. BAAC's annual dinner is being held this year on Sunday, October 26th at the Irish Cultural Center, 2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco (near the zoo). Doors will open at six, with dinner at approximately seven. And bring your dancing shoes!

Choose from Breast of Chicken Jerusalem or Roast Cross Ribs of Beef with Bordelaise Sauce. Dinners included salad, potato or rice, vegetables, rolls, and dessert. No host bar. And there's plenty of nearby parking!

Mail your reservations to: Bob Smith, 2300 St. Francis Drive, Palo Alto 94303. Cost is \$20.00 for chicken and \$21.00 for beef, including tax and gratuity.

**Golly, Bob, I/we wouldn't want to miss BAAC's annual dinner! Include me in! I'll help send off the old, ring in the new, and celebrate those who neither come nor go, but who are always around to help!**

**I'm enclosing a check for \_\_\_\_\_ to cover the cost of \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Jerusalem dinner(s) at \$20 each and/or \_\_\_\_\_ Roast Cross Ribs of Beef dinner(s) at \$21/each. I know I won't go hungry, since dinner includes salad, potato or rice, vegetables, rolls, and dessert.**

**(Signed)** \_\_\_\_\_

## INTERMUSIK Accordion Newspaper

BAAC is now exchanging publications with INTERMUSIK, a monthly newspaper about accordion happenings all over the world. INTERMUSIK is mostly in the German language, as it is published in Kamen, Germany, although some English text has been included in the last two issues.

The editor, Hartmut Lange, spends all his time on the newspaper. He travels extensively to review and write up accordion happenings, and he takes along some very sophisticated camera equipment, hence most of the pictures appearing in the paper have been taken by Hartmut. He attended the French accordion meeting in Chartres this year, where Peter Soave was kind enough to introduce him and his paper to Your Editor. We had a long talk (his English is terrific), and I came away very impressed with his publication. The circulation, he told me, is 50,000 copies. Pretty impressive!

The current (September) issue is 16 newspaper-sized pages and includes articles about Frank Marocco, the American Klezmer accordionist Sy Kushner and smaller articles about Pauline Oliveros and punk accordionist Malcolm Tent at this year's AAA Festival. There are many photos, anywhere from one to six per page. And of course there is lots of information about European accordion events along with a very long list of upcoming worldwide accordion happenings.

The lead article this month includes a photo in color which shows French accordionist Jean-Louis Noton playing a Cavagnolo accordion (Jean-Louis is Cavagnolo's demonstrator for the recently developed reedless "Odyssee" accordion) in the snow at the top of Switzerland's Mount Blanc... 13,000 feet up. He's not wearing gloves, either. That's the way Jean Louis chose to celebrate his birthday. BAAC may have the opportunity to meet this daredevil at our February meeting, as he plans to be in Los Angeles for the NAAM show the previous weekend.

Subscription prices are not quoted, as they depend upon postage costs. But the newspaper itself costs 4.5 deutschmarks, for starters. The address is INTERMUSIK, Postfach 1609, 59159 Kamen, Germany. E-mail is schmuelling@intermusik.un.eunet.de. They have a web site at <http://www.akkordeon.com/intermusik>.

## TIME FOR A CHANGE.....

by Marian Kelly

BAAC's newsletter editor, yours truly, has been given another job, a *big* job. I greatly appreciate the expression of confidence which you showed by electing me as your new President. And I intend to do all that I can to demonstrate that your confidence is well placed.

In order to manage that, I am turning the editorship of the newsletter over to Bob Berta, who has kindly agreed to become the new editor. In other words, Bob and I are switching jobs effective October 1st. Therefore, this issue of the BAAC newsletter is my last.

As I write that, I am aware of some very mixed feelings. In many respects, making the newsletter happen every month is a big drag. I've done it now for more than five years, and many is the month that I've procrastinated on getting it started until I knew that it just had to happen NOW. Even then, sometimes I'd sit in front of the computer for a little while, then jump up to do something else which obviously was more important (ha!). One thing that has helped a lot, something that many members may not be aware of, is that BAAC has been paying me a little bit monthly (\$125) to make the newsletter happen. That began three years ago at a time when I was ready to give up the monthly burden. And somehow, even though the money only results in a very small hourly fee, the fact of the payment has helped a great deal, and I haven't threatened to quit since. Until now.

Because, my friends, drag or not, I've enjoyed doing this, and I know I will miss my monthly bout of tying myself to my computer. I've received many compliments and thanks over the years, and I greatly treasure those good words of support. It was important to know that people cared. I recognize that the newsletter is BAAC's statement to the outside world, and I have felt privileged to be the person making most of that statement.

I've worked with Bob for long enough to feel very confident that he will only change our newsletter by improving it, and I'm looking forward to seeing what he does! I'm sure you'll cheer him on as you have encouraged me.

Boaz Rubin

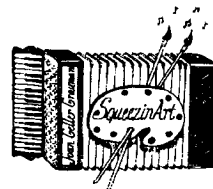
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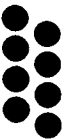


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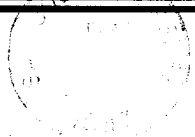
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