

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Marian Kelly

Dear Members and Friends;

Get ready for lots of warm season accordion activities! When we talk at Board meetings about upcoming Club events, we suddenly realize how many different things we're doing and asking you to please attend. These events come up one at a time, of course, so the numbers kinda sneak up on us. A little like raising children, seems to me. They come one at a time, so perhaps you don't really notice, but you suddenly realize one day that there are quite a few in your house!

Anyhow, we're asking all of you to think hard about attending most or many Club events this year. We need you to support the accordion activities in BAAC's house. When we hold successful (meaning well-attended) events, we are motivated to expand our thinking about accordion activities and to plan both more and better ones. Your attendance and participation gives us lots of encouragement in what we're doing, and, like most folks in this life, we do need that encouragement. So we hope you'll support us in the upcoming months to whatever extent each of you can. Come and bring family members and help us get to know them!

The May general meeting (4th) is the first such event. It's our traditional Ladies' Night, when male accordionists are in very short supply if not completely absent. It's always a popular, well-attended meeting; this year Bob tells me the ladies have been signing up to play for several months so that the program is already full (April 12th). So come and cheer all of us on!

July (6th) is Art Van Damme tribute night. We'll honor Art at the general meeting because we think we'll get a better turnout that way. We're not asking Art to play, but we do plan to show a half-hour video which shows all his stuff. We WILL have him talk, however, and we'll give everyone an opportunity to become acquainted with this marvelously personable accordion legend. More details later, but for now, plan to attend! *Continued on page 4*

Mark Your Calendars

May 4 (Tuesday). BAAC General Membership Meeting at Verdi Club in San Francisco. 2424 Mariposa at Potrero. 7:00 - 9:30pm+. Ladies Night. Special guest appearances by Barbara Ann Barnett, Carolyn Cooley and "Corner Tour", Collette Ogada, Jane Trippy, Diana Gutkin, Students of Ken Chambers and special guest artist Val Floren Brewer.

May 2 (Sunday). Russian Folk Music workshop with Steven Shen. At Boaz accordions in Oakland. \$35. Call 510-653-6983 to reserve a spot.

May 6 (Thursday). (And every 1st. Thursday) Meeting of the Accordion Circle of the East Bay. 7:30pm. 951 Aileen, Oakland. For info call 510-653-6983.

May 8 (Saturday). Barbara Ann Barnett and the trio, 'Belle Beaucoup', will be playing at the Berkly Free Folk Festival at the Unitarian Church, corner of Cedar & Bonita at 4:30pm.

May 9 (Sunday). (and every 2nd Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? Bring your accordion!

May 10 (Monday) (And every second Monday). Accordion Circle of the East Bay Ensemble practice. Beginning and intermediate players. 7:30pm, in West Berkeley at 816 Bancroft. Cost: \$10 per practice. Led by Henri Ducharme, 510-526-3255 or Jean O'Malley, 510-843-9958.

May 11 (Tuesday). (and every second Tuesday). Meeting of the Golden State Accordion-Aires. 7:00pm. Pietro's No.2. 679 Merchant St. Vacaville. Ca.

May 17 (Monday). (and every third Monday). Meeting of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods. 7:00pm. Volpi's in Petaluma.

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May 28-30. 21st Annual Far West Button Box Jamboree. Fontana, Calif. Call Frank Vidergar at (909)422-1994 for more info.

June 1. (Tuesday). BAAC General membership meeting. Featuring Ken Chambers. Accordion Swap Night. \$5 charge each vendor. Come and sell/shop for accordions, music, music related items and white elephants.

June 6 (Sunday). Ducharme's Technique Series, Part 1 (Intermediate, advanced). At Boaz accordions in Oakland. \$35. Call 510-653-6983 to reserve a spot.

June 13 (Sunday). (and every 2nd Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? Bring your accordion!

June 13 (Sunday). Demo of Gastagnari two row button box with Carolyn Anderson. At Boaz accordions in Oakland. Free Call 510-653-6983 to reserve a spot.

June 27 (Sunday). Irish Music for Piano Accordion with Libby McLaren (Intermediate). At Boaz accordions in Oakland. \$35. Call 510-653-6983 to reserve a spot.

July 16-18. Accordion Teachers Guild (ATG) Festival. Branson, MO. Call Amy Jo Sawyer at (618)632-2859.

June 17, 18, 19. Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration and Competition. Leavenworth, Washington. Call (509)548-5807.

July 31 (Saturday). Accordion Club of the Redwoods Summer Picnic.

August 28-29. Cotati Accordion Festival.

Sept. 18. (Saturday). BAAC annual picnic at Nature Friends picnic area in Oakland. Details to follow.

BAAC Ensemble practice first and third Wednesday of each month at Moose Lodge in Colma at 7535 Mission St. from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Frank Montoro (650)574-4757 for additional information.

BAAC Fun Band practice fourth Wednesday of each month at Moose Lodge in Colma at 7535 Mission St. from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Tom Cordoni @ 415-333-5625 for more information.

Beginners Support Groups/Bands East Bay 510-843-9958 San Francisco 415-673-8835 South Bay 408-258-1258

Please send Calendar Information to your Editor, using the address on the last page.

April Meeting Review

by Frank Lima, Julio Morgani and Bob Berta

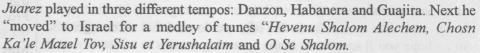
The April meeting was our annual Dessert Night featuring the goodies of our members. Those plus the fine snacks provided by the Verde Club made for a tasty supplement to the tasty music provided by our evenings entertainers.

MC Frank Lima (AKA Julio Morgani) took center ring literally with a ring master outfit! Frank provided unique name tags which pictured various fa-

mous accordionists. During the evening various names were drawn of those famous accordionists. If you were lucky enough to be wearing that person's picture you were the lucky winner of an accordion cooky made by Frank's mother.

To start the festivities Frank himself played *There's No Business Like Show Business* and a beautiful tune by that hot young Italian tenor, Andrea Bocelli, called *Caruso*. The full program started with Mike Sanossian playing *Por La Cabeza*, *Blue Lady Polka* and *Just Because*. Mike always impresses with his ability to select great tunes that he performs in nice arrangements.

Herb Meier was next up with a selection of South American and Jewish tunes. Herb has an incredible knowledge of the various Latin dance beats and during his performances enjoys illustrating the differences in the structure between them. This night he selected a Peruvian waltz, *Nube Gris*, a medley of *Cumbias* from Columbia and a unique performance of a Mexican semiclassical piece called



Brian Campanella took to the stage with his chromatic button accordion in fine performances of *Cuckoo Cuckoo*, a waltz and a few other tunes. We had heard good reports of his playing at the San Jose branch of our club and we finally got a chance to hear him. I was unable to hear all the titles but young Brian came through with moving, sensitive performances and it was obvious he has been hard at work. Father Rob Campanella

followed on his chromatic button accordion with Baraldinette, Malaguena, Come



Mike Sanossian



Herb Meier



Robert and Brian Campanella

Back to Sorrento and the Theme From The Godfather. After hearing dad play it was obvious where Brian got his fine sense of muscianship!



Roberto Rosa

A short intermission gave us a chance to partake of the various goodies and socialize. We continued with Roberto Rosa performing Ain't Misbehavin, a folkloric song from his native Puerto Rico called Danza, How High The Moon and

ended with Samba from Black Orpheus. Roberto is a fantastic musician and of course there is nobody who can match him when it comes to electronics in the accordion and MIDI. Roberto and Arnie Krenn spoke to us before the meeting of their partnership with Weltmeister Accordions in a forthcoming exotic MIDI setup of Roberto's design which is wireless both in the MIDI and acoustic mikes.

Don Nurisso, Ron Borelli on accordions were joined by Marc Hinchman on drums in amazing performances of Someday my Prince Will Come, Cheek to Cheek. Dancero and Cherokee. BAAC can pride itself on having some of the very finest jazz musicians in the world as members.

The last performance of the night was by a very special guest, Rahman Assadollahi. Rahman is a native of Azerbaijan but now living in Germany. We first heard of Rahman when a video was forwarded for our review which

featured him in various concerts in Azerbaijan. We were very impressed and when word of a forthcoming 2-CD set was announced we had the opportunity to hear more from this incredible musician. Upon hearing that he was coming to the US on concert tour sponsored by the Azerbaijan Cultural Society of Northern California we took to opportunity to see if he would be available to visit our club after a concert in San Jose. Luckily he was able to fit it into his visit. Rahman is a composer and ar-



seemed to take on a life of its own as Rahman drew from his pallet of a seemingly endless variety of wonderful flourishes. bellows shakes and flutters and fantastic fingering technique. The playing was accompanied by a drummer who also was remarkable (sadly I was unable to get his name). Truly this was one of the most remarkable performances I have wit-

> nessed and the audience evidently was very impressed and showed their appreciation with a standing ovation after each of the three selections performed...one of which was written over 900 years ago!. BAAC members are not easily impressed and it takes a remarkable musician to get us onto our feet! Our members recognize a true virtuoso and we appreciated Rahman's sharing of his love for folk music with us. A special thanks to Ali Bakhtar for making this special performance possible.

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music on his accordion in

the country of the music's

origin! This is truly a crime,

music should not be politi-

mance the audience was

treated to some of the most

intense playing we have

ever witnessed. The instru-

ment flowed with "life" as

Rahman used his extensive

technical expertise to fash-

ion musical tones and nu-

ances which were truly

amazing. The instrument

During his perfor-

ranger and has received two honorary degrees in music from the Azerbaijan State Music University and the Conservatory of Music of Azerbaijan. In addition he competed in a large accordion competition in Europe in 1995 and received first place.

Rahman plays the folk music of Azerbaijan and Iran on a variety of the accordion called the Garmon. This instrument resembles a 12 bass piano accordion with relatively thin keys. The instrument is played with only one shoulder strap over the right shoulder and the right hand pushes against the side of the keyboard using mostly 4 fingers for playing. The tuning of the Garmon is different than "standard" western tuning as appropriate for the style of music.

Prior to his playing Rahman passionately spoke through an interpreter of his life and love of folk music. He described how the music he was playing was outlawed now and that he himself had served time in jail for playing folk

cized.

Rahman Assadollahi



Ron Borelli & Don Nurisso

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Presidents message continued from page 1

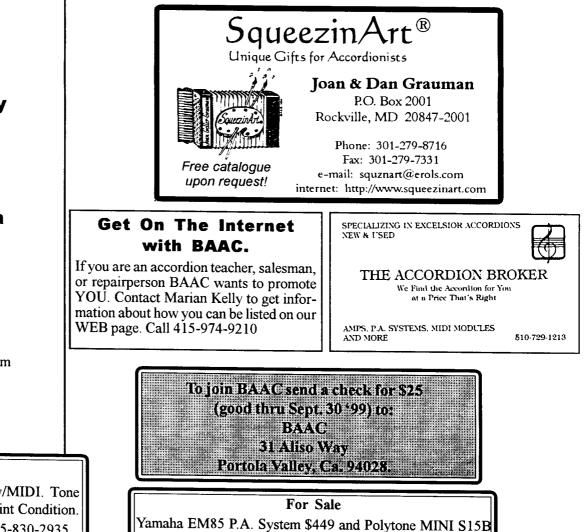
We'll set up our BAAC booth at the Cotati Festival the last weekend in August (28, 29), as usual. I'm sure we'll see many of you there, because this Festival has become THE California accordion event.

Then things really heat up. Our September meeting (7^{th}) will be all Peter Soave. Probably THE finest American accordionist. If you haven't heard him play, your accordion education is simply not complete. We're not quite sure how many different types of accordion he will play, but let's start by naming both the bandoneon (recently learned) and the bayan (learned at age 16). Then perhaps a piano accordion (learned beginning at age 5 or so), and who knows what else?? And all in the most competent and professional style that you've encountered. Don't miss Peter's first guest appearance with BAAC.

Our picnic is scheduled for Saturday, September 18th. Last year's Nature Friends site in Oakland and our provided menu of chicken, salad, beans, rolls, dessert, beer/soft drinks proved so successful that we've given no thought to alternatives.

Lastly, there's our our annual dinner. To welcome new officers and thank the old, used ones. We decided to move it from October to November (2^{nd}) just to find a quieter period. We'll do it right at Moose and as part of a general meeting to encourage lots of attendees.

Thanks for listening to all these requests for your support. When these events turn out to be wonderful successes, as I'm sure they will be, we'll all be motivated to repeat the successful ones and invent new ones for your pleasure.



\$325 Mint Conditon - Paul - 925-830-2935.

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ACCORDION TO BOAZ

by Boaz Rubin

I am often asked whether age enhances the sound of an accordion. Some musicians speculate that because a violin or guitar can sound better with age, an accordion must sound better also. The truth is that stringed instruments are a special case.

If one were to stretch a string between two sticks and pluck it or bow it, the sound would not carry. The string needs a resonating chamber in order to produce a sound loud enough to be useful as an unamplified musical instrument. The vibrating walls of the resonating chamber conduct the sound of the string to the air and thence to your ear, and the sound you hear is principally the sound of the wood as the strings affect it. As the wood of a guitar or violin settles with age, its resonating properties improve. This is what causes the "mellowing."

Reed instruments, such as clarinets or accordions, do not depend on resonating chambers. (Yes, some accordions have tone chambers, but the tone chamber is not the principal element in producing the sound, the reeds are.) This is not to say that the quality of wood used to build a clarinet

or an accordion isn't important. Reeds, however, communicate directly with the air and create a strong tone even in the absence of any wood or resonating help. The clarinetists that I spoke to felt that the only difference between a new clarinet and an aged one was the worn-out action of the older instrument.

In other words, the sound quality of a stringed instrument depends on wood, but the sound quality of a reed instrument depends on the reeds.

And the reeds of an accordion are made of metal, which does not mellow with age - rather, it deteriorates from repeated tunings and metal fatigue. Clarinetists change their reeds regularly, but accordionists do not. As a result, after about 40-50 years, an accordion that has been played

regularly is likely to be played out. The reeds may no longer hold their tuning as well and they may even begin to sound tinny. So the next time someone tries to tell you an old accordion is like a fine wine, I suggest you raise at least one eyebrow.

Buyers tip: Never buy an accordion you can't first try out. This may sound like common sense, but all too often lately I have customers coming in to the shop with accordions they bought based on a photograph or a romantic description that is too good to be true. Some of these accordions look beautiful outside, and have cobwebs inside. An old accordion can be made to look good and shiny with a cloth and a bit of polish, but if it really sounded that good the seller could probably sell it easily to someone in actual hearing range. Considering that there is really no shortage of used accordions, it is worth being skeptical about making a long-distance purchase. An equivalent item - one that you can touch, see and hear in person - is likely to be locally available.

Accordion answer man Boaz Rubin is a professional repairman based in Oakland. Send your accordion-care questions to Boaz care of this newsletter or e-mail Boaz at: schmatte@well.com.

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Rescuing Ted Mack from an Embarrassing Moment

Anyone remember the Ted Mack Amateur Hour? It was a live TV show back in the late 50's and early 60's. It featured a variety of performers...some of whom were discovered on the show and went on to big careers....others returned to obscurity. The following article was written for "Advertising Age" magazine by Leo-Arthur Kelmenson in the Jan. 27, 1999 issue:

In 1954 or '55, back when agencies produced network TV shows, I was a junior assistant producer at Lennen & Mitchell. We were producing "Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour" for Old Gold cigarettes, live, of course. I was down on the studio floor when Ted introduced a young accordionist named Jefferson Smith. Mr. Smith stood 6 feet 4 inches and was dressed in a plaid shirt and red tie. Curly hair, goodlooking, big smile. From Carroll County, Iowa. He played "God Bless America."

A couple of bars into the song, we realized that as he was pumping the accordion it kept blowing open his fly, which was visibly unzipped.

Now in those days, we had fixed-position cameras. We cold pan left and right. And we could tilt up and down, but we couldn't zoom. Suddenly, the director said, "Kelmenson, get in there and close the kid's fly! I'll raise the camera!"

I crawled onto the set, reached up and grabbed the zipper just as I heard the director say; "Oh! Leo's hand is in the shot!" I had two thoughts: God Bless America, and welcome to show business.

BAAC South Growing

From Dick Cruikshank comes word of the ongoing success of the San Jose branch of our club. Evidently the crowds are becoming fairly sizeable and so much interest has been generated that they met twice last month! Evidently the group is very active and while they primarily meet at the Germania Restaurant, other meeting spots have been provided such as at the Colonial Park Manor's recreation room through Tom Tomasillo and Joe LaBarbera....thanks guys!

If you have a free second Sunday of the month be sure and check them out....you probably should call Dick at 408-258-1258 to confirm the meeting location and times.

June Meeting Accordion Swap Night

Save the night of June 1st for a very special occasion featuring the artistry of **Ken Chambers** and also our **Annual Accordion Swap Night**. This will be your chance to buy/sell accordions, music, music related items and your white elephants. Also on the program is a tentative demo of the new **Petosa Millennium** electronic reedless accordion and a chance for you to try it out. Vendor charge of \$5.

Domenic Saso "Goes Hollywood"

by Bob Berta

Fellow club member Domenic Saso may be launching his second career. He reports that he was selected to play accordion in a new movie. Elliot Gould and Marlo Thomas are the stars and the movie should be out in about three or four months. The name may be called *The Goldsteins*....but that isn't set yet. Domenic played the part of Uncle Muise and appeared in two scenes. Evidently about 27 accordionists were interviewed for the part but Domenics wit and charm won out and he got the part. It was filmed at Fort Mason in San Francisco next to the Club House Restaurant.

He also was selected to appear in a pilot for a TV movie called *Friendly Traffic*. Looks like Domenic will have to buy a pair of dark glasses to disguise himself when he goes out in public!

For our WEB Wonderers

If you have Internet Access be sure and check BAAC member Hal Layer's Website out:

HTTP://userwww.sfsu.edu/~hl/a.html Some great pixs and accordion history!

Meet our Guest Columnist

by Jim Holliday

This months Tech Article was sent to us by Eddie Chavez of San Antonio, Texas.

Eddie, along with Edwin Davison and San Franciscan, Ron Flynn, produced the classic book, "The Golden Age of The Accordion". Eddie has had a long obsession with the accordion and has acquired an extensive collection of over 300 recordings of practically every accordion artist in the world over the past 60 years.

In addition, Eddie is a Master Builder of scale model airplanes, some of which were displayed for years in the Nut Tree Restaurant in Vacaville, California. He has several exquisite models on display at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. Several of his models will be on permanent special exhibition in the new Aviation History Museum now under construction at the San Francisco International Airport.

We extend an invitation for readers of the BAAC newsletter to submit instructional articles for publication in future issues. If there is something about sight reading, harmony, chords, or anything you've learned that might be helpful to other accordionists, please write an article or make a diagram about it, whatever - and submit it to our Editor, Bob Berta. We welcome you input!



HUG AN ACCORDION

EDDIE CHAVEZ

9019 HETHERINGTON SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78240-3611 (210) 647-5878



A FEW NOTES FROM A TEXAS "PLAY BY EAR" MAN By Eddie Chavez

I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE ACCORDION WHEN I HEARD CHARLES MAGNANTE PLAYING ON THE RADIO. I'M NOW 81 YEARS OLD, AND BACK THEN IT WAS THE DEPRESSION DAYS. FEW PEOPLE HAD MONEY FOR AN ACCORDION, ACCORDION LESSONS, OR EVEN MONEY TO BUY A RADIO. I SAVED MONEY BY SELLING NEWS PAPERS AND BUILDING MODEL AIRPLANES, AND WAS ABLE TO BUY A SMALL HOHNER ACCORDION FOR \$25.00. AFTER PLAYING AN OLD 78 RPM RECORD ON OUR EDISON VICTROLA, I LEARNED THAT THE LORD HAD GIVEN ME A GIFT THAT ENABLED ME TO PLAY ANY MUSIC I HEARD, NOT THE CLASSICS, BUT STANDARD MUSIC. TO THIS DAY, I CAN PLAY 95% OF ANY OF THE OLD NUMBERS ENTIRELY BY EAR. I DON'T READ MUSIC AT ALL. WHAT HELPED ME, WAS TO PLAY THE RECORDS OF THE MUSIC I WANTED TO LEARN AND LISTEN, LISTEN! WATCH PEOPLE IN YOUR CLUB WHO ARE FINE ACCORDIONISTS. YOU CAN LEARN FROM THEIR PLAYING BY NOTING HOW THEY TOUCH THE KEYS AND BASS BUTTONS, AND MORE SO HOW THEY MOVE THE BELLOWS. THE ACCORDION BELLOWS ARE SIMILAR TO A VIOLIN BOW. TO A LARGE EXTENT IT'S THE BELLOWS THAT MAKE YOUR MUSIC SOUND THE WAY YOU WANT IT TO SOUND. RECORD YOUR MUSIC, THEN LISTEN TO YOURSELF. WHEN YOU'RE ACTUALLY PLAYING YOUR INSTRUMENT, THE MUSIC IS GOING AWAY FROM YOU AND YOU'RE NOT REALLY HEARING IT. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE IF YOU WANT TO PLAY WELL!

ACCORDIONIST, ACCORDION HISTORIAN & CONSULTANT Authority on Accordion Records/Artists/Accordions Co-author: The Golden Age of the Accordion

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If you would like to play at a meeting contact Bob Berta at 510-450-5766					