

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO

BAY AREA ACCORDION CLUB

Editors: Marian Kelly
Dominic Palmisano

AUGUST GENERAL MEETING

Another enthusiastic meeting. 'Tis wonderful to have all of you folks attend our general meetings so regularly. Votes of confidence expressed with your feet are very welcome!

Our esteemed President, **Peter Di Bono**, who proudly sports his new title (Grandpa), opened the meeting by announcing that September's meeting will be held in August. As if that weren't unusual enough, it will feature a 90-minute concert by **Frank Marocco**, the fantastic musician who has done so much TV and movie work during the past 20 years, and who will be fresh from his wonderfully successful guest performance at the Cotati Festival. With that generous hint, you may have already surmised that our September meeting will be held on Monday, August 31st. Since the following Monday is Labor Day, we had to move the meeting day, and, given Frank's proximity, Monday the 31st was an obvious choice. Please mark your calendars *now*.

A reminder from Financial Secretary **Rusty Bartoli**: membership dues for '92-'93 are now payable and are fast becoming past due. Please mail \$20 to Rusty at 222 Prague St., San Francisco 94112 if you want to continue to receive your newsletter.

Walter has tickets available for the John Molinari concert featuring San Francisco Squeeze. Price is \$7.50: with only 200 available, he suspects they'll soon be gone.

The Cotati festival on August 29th

and 30th is coming up fast. **Clifton Buck-Kauffman**, the Father of this delightful event, drove down to thank us for our \$1,500 donation, which allowed them to provide bleachers this year and a tent for anyone wanting to jam with others.

Marian Kelly needs help staffing our booth at the festival, from which we will sell accordion tapes and BAAC t-shirts. Please call her (415-854-1896) if you can help for two hours either day.

With considerable flourish, **Peter** then introduced **Renzo Latone**, a BAAC member from Carmel, the proprietor of Renaissance Glass Studio. As a long-time accordion aficionado, **Renzo** decided to make a contribution to our club, and brought with him a gorgeous 2'x3' piece of framed chipped glass, featuring an image of the Golden Gate bridge and the words "San Francisco Bay Area Accordion Club". As **Peter** unveiled **Renzo's** work, the crowd "ahhhd" loudly and burst into spontaneous applause.

Our newest honorary member, **Blake Parker**, 9 years old, attended with his family and was introduced. **Blake** takes lessons from **Domenic Saso**.

After all this, we were all ready for music. **Frank Montoro** led it off with four gorgeous numbers on his favorite toy, his Midi. One number used a Middle East accompaniment, giving him the opportunity to really show off his instrument. His rendition of Whitney Houston's "One Moment in Time" was exquisite.

Jerry Kramer stepped forward and

whipped through a Paganinni number which reminded us of how beautiful classics can sound on the accordion. He then treated us to a delightful, rousing rendition of the "Clarinet Polka".

Leo Troy next performed "Granada", a Spanish Paso Doble, then played and sang "'Pennsylvania 65000" with everyone joining in.

At intermission **Carol Benetti** pleased everyone with coffee and cookies. **Josephine Hornbrook** is our new Refreshment Chairperson, and will contact members about rotating the task of supplying monthly goodies.

Lou Soper started the second half with nice, jazzy versions of "Our Day Will Come", "Meditation", "Wave", "Watch What Happens", and "Girl from Ipanema". He closed with a moving version of 'Ol Blue Eyes' tune, "My Way", which Lou both played and sang.

Peter Di Bono followed Lou with terrific versions of "Schoen Rosmarin," Frosini's "Val Viso," and the gorgeous "Nessun Dorma" from the opera Turandot. He handled the long phrases beautifully giving us a silent, bellows control lesson.

Brother **Reno** closed the program with two numbers, the last dedicated to his Mother, which he sang in Italian. A fitting close to a fine evening. Many of us adjourned to Lyons for additional schmoozing: please join us yourself next time.

Barbara Hartley

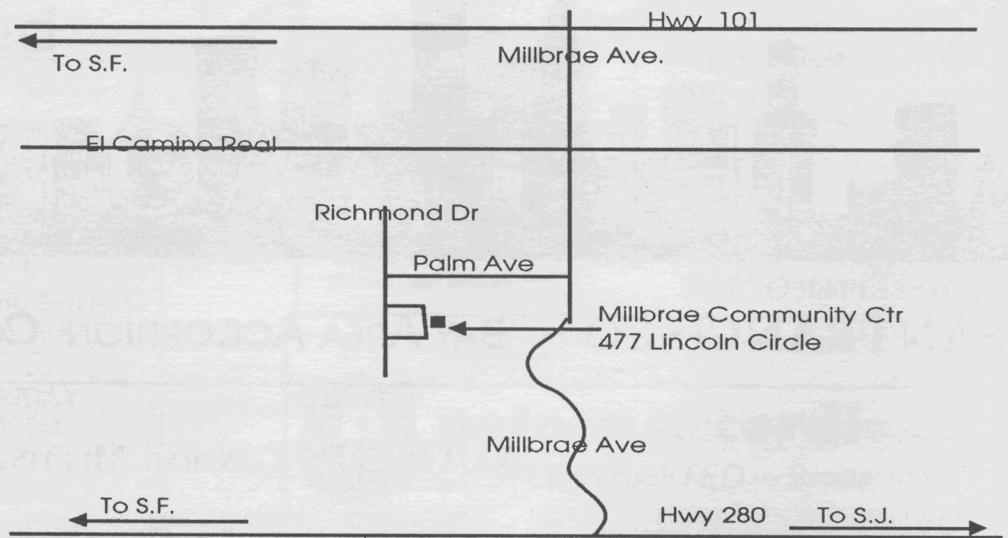


MARK YOUR CALENDARS

August 29, 30th. The Second Annual Cotati Accordion Festival. From 11 A.M. to 6 (or so) P.M. both days. On Saturday see BAAC members Steve Balich, Michelle Gallandre, Marian Kelly, Lou Casalnuovo, and Those Darned Accordions!. On Sunday, see members Joe Smiell, Peter Di Bono, the S.F. Accordion Ensemble, T.D.A!, Jim Boggio. Additionally, hear Art Van Damme and Ken Olendorf Saturday and Frank Marocco and Tommy Gumina on Sunday. BAAC will have a busy booth featuring audio tapes by a wide variety of accordion artists, both present and not. If you can help staff our booth, see Marian or Frank Montoro. Bring your accordions for the mid-afternoon Lady of Spain party and for use in the jam tent! Don't miss it!

August 31st. Another don't miss is the Bay Area Accordion Club's September General Meeting, at the usual place, usual time, one week early. Frank Marocco, who has been featured in countless motion pictures and TV and radio shows, will be our Guest.

September 27th. The John Molinari Memorial Concert, featuring The San Francisco Accordion Ensemble, with John Molinari, Jr. and Joe Smiell as Conductor. Location is the Millbrae Community Recreation Center, 477 Lincoln Circle, Millbrae at 2 P.M. Complimentary wine and coffee will be served. Tickets, at \$7.50 each, are available from either Walter (585-0144) or Frank (574-4757). Call soon...the Center seats only 200!



THIS WAY to the September 27th Concert

BAAC'S NEW STAGE IDENTIFICATION



Created and Donated by
Renzo Latone
Renaissance Glass Studio
Carmel Valley, CA

Profile of

Peter Di Bono

Peter Di Bono was a terrible accordion student when he was a kid. His father Tony's music and encouragement had led him to begin lessons when he was nine. At that age, carrying an accordion on the bus to John Pezzolo's studio on Mission Street was a formidable task. Later, Tony met Dino Benetti and all three Di Bonos took lessons from him. But Peter lacked motivation for playing, took the lessons reluctantly, practiced as little as possible, and several times quit for six months or so, then resumed lessons after his extended vacation. Not the stuff of which virtuosos are made. Then, at age thirteen, the fledgling teenager began to play at North Beach French and Basque restaurants for \$20 a night. Aha!! Money for talent, he thought. Hmmm.

During high school, Peter earned \$60 - 80 on a Saturday night while his classmates pumped gas many more hours for half the pay. While at Sacred Heart, he and classmate Bob Molinari on drums won a contest sponsored by Coca-Cola called Talentville U.S.A. Teaming up with another young musician and two girl singers, he became a bit of a local celebrity, even playing on radio.

Peter really wanted to be a baseball player but gave it up when he failed to make the St. Louis Cardinals' farm club. He decided to be like his mentor, Dino Benetti, combining teaching accordion and playing casuals. He finished one semester at San Francisco State, then dropped out to join a traveling circus as an

accordionist. The owner tired of transporting an organ and decided to use an amplified accordion. The pay was great and the concept exciting. But then he injured his finger, cutting short both his finger and his fledgling circus career. John Molinari Jr. took his place and played such shows as the Ice Capades for 10-15 years.

Peter returned somewhat reluctantly to teaching, but only until his career took another turn. The San Francisco Police Academy accepted him as a cadet. He worked as a patrolman for several years while playing casuals at night. Chief Al Nelder took note of what Peter and several other officers were doing at night. Recognizing the

department's need for improved P.R., especially with young people, and asked the group to play in the schools during the day to help increase rapport with the younger crowd. It worked beautifully. The "Electric Blue" played at two or three schools a week initially, but were soon playing two shows daily, five days a week.

After a while, Peter transferred to the Juvenile Bureau so he could play nights again. He became a specialist in the Bureau of Narcotics rising to the level of Inspector. After twelve years in the Department, though, he injured his neck and back on the job then retired. He then went to Law School and received his degree so that he could become a commercial realtor.

Two years ago, after he had almost stopped playing again, he heard about BAAC. He attended sporadically, then one night someone asked him to play on a borrowed accordion. He played

"Granada" and the ovation he received inspired him. Peter decided to resume accordion lessons from Ernst Gloe with whom he had studied during the time he went to S.F. State, and you know the rest.

As our new president, Peter knows how important the club is to all of us, and he wants to us grow as an organization and a movement to bring back the popularity of the accordion. He is deeply concerned that there are so few young students to take our place and is committed to the school program we began last year.

It is just as important to know how to end a note as how to start it.

Anthony Galla-Rini

Synopsis of July BAAC Board Meeting

- Next year's picnic will be handled by Walter Traverso and a committee rather than by Walter alone.
- BAAC's \$1500 contribution to the Cotati Festival Committee has enabled them to provide bleachers for more comfortable seating this year as well as a jam tent for all spontaneous playing and one for a display of historical accordions.
- We will sell a variety of accordion tapes and our own t-shirts at our booth at the Cotati Festival.
- Lou Soper will oversee either construction or rental of a booth.
- The Treasurer reported a total of \$4,231.66 in both bank accounts.
- Tickets for the John Molinari concert with the San Francisco Accordion Ensemble on September 27th have been printed. Assignments were made to board members to handle ticket sales, program printing, and refreshments.
- The budget for the upcoming year was discussed and agreed upon.
- Motion passed to have Frank Marocco as a guest artist at our September meeting, to be held on August 31st, and to pay him a fee and expenses.

Dear Editor:

During our Chicago vacation my wife Carol and I were graciously hosted several evenings by Lee Sash, window of the world-famous jazz accordion artist, Leon Sash. Lee is a fine jazz bassist, also singing many songs on Leon Sash's recordings.

Lee is a very warm, hospitable, loving person who still loves accordion; she introduced me to many fine accordionists in the Chicago area. If you plan to be in Chicago, contact me or Peter Di Bono to obtain her address.

I also spent an afternoon with Joe Romagnoli, president of the Italo-American Accordion Manufacturing Co. (312-776-2992). This fiercely independent accordion maker manufactures fine custom-built, excellent-sounding accordions which weigh less than 19 pounds. Joe would also like to hear from you.

In closing, please be assured that fine accordion playing and manufacturing are alive and well in Chicago.

Accordionly yours,
Don Nurisso

Words from Your Librarian

All of us who play music know the importance of adding pieces to our own libraries. For this reason, we started a music lending library last year. The idea was, and is, to introduce to our members tunes which they could either copy or order from the publishers, depending on the copyright status.

A number of you have availed yourselves of the service, but a lending library is what the word implies. Items need to be returned so that others may have the chance to check them out. Therefore, we are asking that you begin returning items if they have been out for more than two months.

Incidentally, we welcome contributions to the library at any time. The club will purchase additional selections as the budget allows but we still rely on members' contributions to keep the library going.

Frank Montoro

IN MEMORY OF JOE SPANO

I first contacted Joe Spano in the late 60's to ask about his accordion tuning and repair services. What started as a customer relationship soon developed in a great friendship. I soon discovered I had hit pay dirt, as I have never personally encountered more beautiful tuning and general servicing than that done by Joe Spano.

Joe started teaching when he was 15. In partnership with Frank Iacolucci, he started his own studio in 1950. Together, Joe and Frank founded the Northwest Accordion Teachers Association in 1952. The first N.W.A.T.A. competitions began in 1953, and have remained an annual event ever since.

Joe was inclined to be low key and on the quiet side. He was one of the most genuinely modest people I ever met. One of Joe's outstanding students is Diane Schmidt, who took lessons from Joe for about 10 years before winning the coveted Coupe Mondiale in Salzburg, Austria in 1970. A few years later, I adjudicated two separate competitions and awarded highest marks to Donna Schmidt and later to Barbara Schmidt, both of whom are Diane's sisters. All three girls were Joe Spano's students. These results certainly reflect teaching of the highest order. All of us enjoy praise occasionally, and yet in all the years I have known him, I have never heard Joe refer to any of his own noteworthy accomplishments. In fact, I never even suspected that Joe was an excellent accordionist until several years after our first meeting. Joe was one who spoke not of his own accomplishments, but whose accomplishments spoke eloquently of him.

Joe Spano passed away on July 24, 1992 at the age of 71. He is survived by his wife Roni, his son Rick and daughter Jeniene. To all who knew him, he was a kind, gentle, capable, and exceptionally considerate person. He will be greatly missed, and it is with sadness that I personally bid farewell to a dear friend.

Leo Aquino

GOODBYE TO THE BANDONEON GIANT

Astor Piazzola, one of Argentina's most popular composers of modern tangos, died in Buenos Aires on July 6, 1992, at the age of 71. He had suffered a stroke two years ago from which he never recovered.

Hundreds of people lined up to pay their respects to him after Mayor Carlos Grosso decided to hold Piazzola's wake at the Marble Hall of the City Council building.

Astor Piazzola was a gifted player of the bandoneon, which is Argentina's principal tango instrument. He was praised for writing revolutionary tango music which incorporated elements of jazz and other modern music and classical music. He was born in Mar del Plata, but spent much of his childhood in New York, where his father moved to work as a barber.

When Astor was 10, his father gave him a second-hand bandoneon. "I started playing tangos because I received a bandoneon. Had my father given me a saxophone, I would now be a jazz musician" he once said.

He is survived by his third wife, Laura Escalada, a son, and a daughter. He is buried in a private cemetery outside Buenos Aires.

NEWS FLASH!!


Lou Fanucchi has been selected as one of the musicians who will accompany

Luciano Pavarotti

at his concert at the
San Diego Sports Arena
on October 22nd.

Now *that's* quite an honor!

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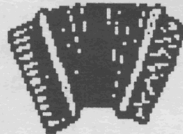
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August 31, 1992
7:00PM

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