

President's Message

by Marian Kelly

Dear Members and Friends:

Please note: There will be NO September General Meeting this year.

You probably recall that we try to re-schedule meetings which would be held on a holiday to the second Monday. Labor Day is the first Monday every year, of course, so it always provides a scheduling challenge. This year we are unable to obtain Donworth Hall for the second Monday of September, so we have decided to encourage everyone to get their accordion fixes the week before, at Cotati, the week after, in San Jose, and the week after that, at our Sept. 20th picnic. There are, after all, lots of accordion activities happening in that time period. So we're reversing our usual message to you...please don't come to Donworth on the first Monday in September.

Tickets are now available for both the Picnic (\$10 includes a barbecued chicken feast) and for Cotati (\$8 for one day, \$15 for two). BAAC earns \$2/ticket on our Cotati sales, so if you're planning to attend, please purchase them from us in August. And please consider helping at both or either of these events. We'll need chefs (and chefettes?) for the chicken and servers for the rest of the food. Our Cotati booth, which is our only fund raiser for the year, will need people willing to work the booth to talk up our club and to sell accordions in two-hour shifts. Volunteer for either of these events by calling BAAC's voicemail number, (415) 974-9210, or signing one of the sheets at the August meeting. We need your help!

Our kickoff San Jose meeting on July 12th, by the way, was quite a success. About forty people attended, many of whom we hadn't seen before, and some of whom we hadn't seen for a long time. That was just what we had hoped! The tables and chairs were around the perimeter of the room, so those who played just sat or stood near the center of the room, giving everybody a front row seat. We spent a little while on introductions, and a little playing. Then we began with the middle-of-the-room music.

First up was one of those people whom we didn't know. We had him go

Mark Your Calendars

August 3 (Monday). BAAC General Meeting. Those lazy, hazy days of summer will welcome a fine slate of performers. Scheduled to perform... Leo Tastsides (from Vacaville), Frank Panacci, Julio Morgani and Roberto Rosa. We are looking for a first time performer for this night....if you are ready to take the plunge please contact Ed Massolo at 650-589-8409. Meeting starts 7:00pm, Eucalyptus and 22nd. Ave, San Francisco (first block north of the Stonestown Shopping Center).

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

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

August 12 (Wednesday). 7:30pm. BAAC Board Meeting at Ed Massolo's home at 612 Lassen in So. San Francisco. Guests welcome.

August 16 (Sunday). Armando Bugari accordion demo with Steve Albini. 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Boaz Accordions, Oakland. FREE. Limited space; pre-registration required. Door prize. Tel 510-595-9664, fax 510-595-0770.

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

August 15. Accordion Club of the Redwoods picnic. Call (707)838-2859.

August 29-30. Cotati Accordion Festival, Cotati, Calif.

Calendar cont. from page 1

Sept. 7th. (Monday). NO GENERAL MEETING THIS MONTH DUE TO LABOR DAY HOLIDAY.

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

September 20. BAAC Picnic at Nature Friends. Butters Dr. in Oakland.

September 13-19. Joe Smiell's Intermediate and Advanced Button Box Camp, Norden, California. Call (510)832-6938 for more information.

October 5 (Monday). BAAC General Meeting. The theme is "Ethnic Night". Please contact Ed Massolo if you would like your heritage or interests represented.

October 17. BAAC Annual Social Dinner and Dance at the Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco.

November 2 (Monday). BAAC General Membership Meeting. The theme is "Harvest Festival Night" featuring dance music and dance lessons from Ed Massolo.

July 31- Aug. 8. Lark in the Morning Summer Camp 1998. Folk music camp in Mendocino, Calif. call (707)964-5569 or Email Larkinam@larkinam.com.

July 31-Aug. 2. Rocky Mountain Accordion Celebration, Philipburg, Montana. Call (406)859-3450 for more information.

August 8-9. Cabrillo Music Festival in Santa Cruz. New York Tango Project and Frank Marocco are playing.

August 6-9. Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration. Leavenworth, Washington. Call 509-548-5807 for more info.or Email to info@leavenworth.org

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

BAAC Fun Band Will not meet the months of July and August. 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.

Cotati Festival August 29,30

Tickets available at the August meeting.

JULY GENERAL MEETING

by Herb Meier and Bob Berta

Members at the July meeting had a chance to see new and used accordions and various music related items at our second annual Swap Meet. There appeared to be a few bargains there, however, I didn't get a chance to peruse the merchandise due to the various business items I had to attend to....probably for the better...my wife would have killed me if I walked in the door with another accordion.

While the swap night was the big attraction, the entertainers scheduled

for the evening promised to make this a great meeting. Herb Meier as the evenings Master of Ceremonies brought president Marian Kelly on stage to announce all the details of the upcoming events such as the Cotati Accordion Festival, the Club's picnic and the BAAC Fall Dinner at the Irish Social Club.

In addition, more details were announced concerning our second meeting location in San Jose. Also scheduled for the night was a showing of a short video tape of the Nature Friends location that we will use for the annual picnic. This is a spectacularly beautiful spot that promises to make this the best picnic ever. Be sure and get your tickets early...this year the price of admission will include a barbecue chicken meal.



Frank Montoro

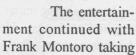
The evening's entertainment started with the BAAC Ensemble. This group is led by Joe Smiell. The group plays multipart music either arranged or composed by Joe himself. The group meets twice a month (information is in the calendar section on page 2) and Joe can write music to suit your particular skill level. The group has grown in size and the performance has shown the entire group is maturing as an ensemble with delightful performances of Beethoven's *The Heavens*

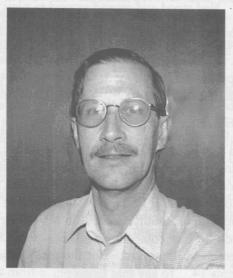


Ron, Don and Mark

are Telling, a Chopin Prelude and Suite No.6 by Joe Smiell. The members are Bob Smith, Nora Mazzara, Frank Montoro, Sharon Walters, Frank Schlotter, Jean Malley, Gwyn Lister,

Val Kieser, Ron Harris, Bob Berta, Aldo Argenti Jr., Valarie Morris, Mike Sanossian. Leo Troitzky, Mary-Alice Eldon and Lynn Ewing. There is no better way to improve your musical skills than to join an ensemble. Our photographer was unable to get a photo of the group since he is a member of the ensemble





Bob Berta

to the stage. We are used to hearing Frank play his fine MIDI accordion. For this event he decided to skip the electronics and played his MIDI acoustically. Many forget that MIDI accordions are still fine acoustic accordions and we enjoyed Franks playing of Farewell Granada, Por Que?, Canzone Amorosa and Post Card.

Newsletter Editor and past president Bob Berta was next up. He took a cue from Frank Montoro and left his MIDI

accordion home opting to play his 30 year old Bugari instead. Bob always enjoys playing music from a variety of time periods and styles. This time he focused on the early part of this century. He played Elanor, When the Clock is Striking Twelve and Liebsfried. nouncing a special surprise, Bob told of finding another Bob Berta on the Internet. The other Bob lives on the other side of the US



Mike James

and is evidently quite famous in harmonica circles. The Harmonica Bob Berta has written and copyrighted some selections of music. One of them is called....*The Bob Berta Polka!* Not one to miss a great tune or story, Bob ended his program with this neat polka originally written for 4 part harmonica ensemble.

Next on stage was Mike James. Mike is an aficionado of Irish music. Obviously Mike really enjoys this type of music and you could tell he was having a lot of fun sharing it with us...,and the audience had a hard time keeping their toes from drumming out the beat of these infectious tunes. Among the tunes that he performed were three reels, three jigs and a combination of the above. Great job Mike....come back again!

Very busy professional accordionist, Alex Yaskin, found time to come to our meeting and play a few numbers on his Bayan. Alex proved not only to be a great musician, but a great story teller. We featured Alex in a column a couple of months ago. From that article we learned that he is a regular performer at four different restaurants! He performs a wide variety of musical styles which makes it easier for him to play at a variety of ethnic restaurants. Currently he plays

at Italian, French, Jewish and Russian restaurants. He also plays guitar but the most unusual "instrument" he plays is the "foot drum". He sits on his accordion case and strikes his foot on the side of the case to create the rhythm to accompany his playing. Among his numbers were Desafinado, Accordioniste, Baby Swan's Dance. Czardas by Monti and The Entertainer.



Alex Yaskin

Final act for the evening was Don Nurisso on accordion, Ron Borelli on keyboard and Mark on drums. They played superb arrangements of *Triste*, *Swing 42*, *I Have the Feeling I've Been Here Before* and *I Married an Angel*. The audience was enthralled with some of the finest jazz we have heard in a long time and asked for an encore. They obliged with an excellent version of *Tangerine*.

The meeting concluded a little early to allow everyone a chance to view the various items displayed at the Swap Meet and try to get a bargain.

BAAC Picnic Sept. 20, 1998

Tickets available at the August meeting.

BAAC Dinner Irish Cultural Center in SF Oct. 17, 1998

President's message cont. from page 1

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CHROMATIC ACCORDION

first because he had to leave early to go to another job. He's Ned Gault, who has lived in/near San Jose all his life, and who plays a wicked button box similar to what Joe Smiell et al play. Ned stood and moved around to play, which was very effective. And he yodels. In between numbers, he told us a little about the building we were in. It's more than 100 years old, he said, and was originally a music store and a home. Later on it was the performance place for the San Jose Symphony. The German community purchased it many years ago now, and use it as a headquarters. And, of course, it's a functioning restaurant, which has long welcomed accordionists.

Back to our music. After Ned, Norma Parsons played first with her student, Bob Clark, and then with Bill Di Michelis (who hasn't made it to SF recently). Then Frank Lima, dressed as if ready to play in a Mariachi band, showed us his wonderful combination of highly listenable music mixed with a little drama. (You can catch Frank at our August meeting.) Then we heard one of two big surprises. Rob Campanella was there with his family. First Rob played for us using his chromatic accordion with which he has come far since his original coaching by Veikko Ahvenainen. We were most impressed. But the really impressive guy was Rob's son, Brian, who is now 14. To say that Brian plays from the heart is a big understatement. He played authoritatively, with both great feeling and accuracy. He surprised and impressed everybody, making us all wonder how these two fellows could be teaching each other so well without any of us knowing about it! Atta boy, Brian! Then Bill Tapolna entertained us with three fine pieces, and our friend Frank Schlotter did the same.

After that came the afternoon's real surprise, Mike Marotta from Monterey. No one there knew Mike, so when he pulled his seat into the middle of the room and began easily knocking off any piece anyone would name, everybody sat there starryeyed. Mike's forte is jazz, and he's been playing it, mostly with groups, in the Monterey area for many year....sounds like he's sort of a fixture down there. At one point, Arnie asked him to play Nola, and you could tell from the expression on his face that he hadn't played Nola in a good many years. But what a mean arrangement of Nola he tossed into our ring! Just delightful. Thank you so much, Mike, for coming so far, for telling such fine stories, and for entertaining us in such royal fashion.

Meantime, people had long before found the restaurant/bar and were bringing back to our room, first drinks, then later, some food. And after the formal playing was over, quite a few folks (including the San Diego accordion club's former President, Ron Griffin), stayed for a couple more hours and just jammed.

We'll definitely hold two more San Jose meetings (and then we'll consider whether to continue them). So please join us on the second Sunday of August and/or of September. That's August 9th and September 13th, from 3PM to ???

Cotati Accordion Festival 1998

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Cotati Accordion Festival.

It is scheduled for Saturday, August 29th and Sunday, August 30th, 1998. It is held in downtown Cotati in the La Plaza Park from 9:30am to 7:00pm both days. Admission is \$8 for one day or \$15 for the two days. Children under 12 are FREE. Cotati is located 50 miles north of San Francisco (off of highway 101). (you can buy the tickets at our next BAAC general membership meeting and BAAC gets \$2 per ticket...editor).

For additional information you can call the Festival Hot Line at 707-664-0444 or go to the Web Site/Homepage at HTTP://www.cotatifest.com/accordion.

The Festival will showcase the finest accordionists; local Bay Area, out of state, and international stars on two stages. Featured artist **Dick Contino** will be playing both days. The Cotati Accordion Festival is a multi-cultural extravaganza, not a competition, which makes this event unique. There will be craft and food booths too! We encourage all visitors to bring their accordions.

The SF Bay Area Accordion Club will sponsor a "jam" tent open to all those who bring their own instrument. The Accordion Club of the Redwoods will feature a wooden dance floor for Polka afficiandos to the music of the Steve Balich Band. Other events you won't want to miss include accordion and performance workshops at local schools and a Cajun Dance Party at the Inn of the Beginning, 2pm to 6 pm both days.

If you bring your accordion to the Festival ...(or you can purchase one at the BAAC booth...editor).you can join in playing the infamous accordion "anthem" Lady of Spain at 3:00pm on both days. This has become a Cotati Festival annual tradition and we intend to break the record for the number of people playing Lady of Spain at the same time by a significant amount.

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Eddie Paul (707)545-7179

Something To Do When You Aren't Squeezin'

BAAC member Jim Van Nostrand of Wyoming has sent us a copy of E. Annie Proulx's recent best seller, Accordion Crimes, and we'd be pleased to lend it to anyone interested in reading it. Call Marian at (650)844-1896. (This is a fascinating book that has a series of stories linked through the travels of an old button accordion...lots of well researched accordion info. too...editor).

July Board Meeting Synopsis

- The Treasurer reports \$8029 in our combined bank accounts.
- · The Board accepted with regret the resignations of both Frank Montoro and Lou Jacklich. Frank Schlotter is our new vice-president.
- The September General Meeting will not be held, due to the Labor Day holiday and the unavailabilty of Donworth on the second Monday.
- · A Nominating Committee is being formed. Peter Adler and Herb Meier are the committee members from the Board; they and the President will recruit three other persons from the general membership. The committee's recommendations will be presented at the August meeting.
- · Plans to host guest Tony Lovello have been shelved for cost reasons.
- The Board voted to spend \$900 to purchase accordions to be sold at our Cotati booth and \$450 for t-shirts, also to be sold at Cotati.
- · Gwyn Lister has volunteered to coordinate and conduct a day-long "breakout" meeting, or retreat, for officers and board, to be held on August 1st. The purpose of this meeting is to think through and clarify club objectives, goals and methods; i.e. to give BAAC a clear map for the next several years. The Board has accepted her offer gratefully. We shall report the results next month.

A Note From ACE (Accordion Chamber Ensemble)

by Mary-Alice Eldon

One of the more satisfying events that stems from BAAC is the opportunity to play for other Accordion clubs in the area. At the instigation of our Composer-Conductor Joe Smiell, we, the San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble (ACE), were invited to play for the Golden State Accordion-Aires in Vacaville and The Accordion Club of the Redwoods in Petaluma, We were warmly and enthusiastically received each time. That both of these perfomances happened last March attests to the fact that we are so busy practicing that we run out of time to inform the Newsletter, Politicians speak these days about 'growing the economy". What BAAC is doing is also most fruitful. We are "growing" accordiion clubs. The newest is the meeting place in San Jose. We should be pleased that more people are playing the accordion in more places as the popularity of the instrument ocntinues to grow. We, ACE, encourage all of you to visit and play at other Clubs. And invite their members to come to BAAC meetings too.



A PIANO ACCORDION

Accordion to Boaz

by Boaz Rubin

Frequently Asked Accordion Questions

What Was That Marked Reed?

Q: The reeds in my accordion have little hash marks on them. Is this some sort of grading system? Do the marks indicate the quality of the reeds?

A: Hohner is the only manufacturer that marks its reeds to indicate their grade. Hohner reeds stamped "H" (common to Hohner piano accordions) are of a higher grade than those with a "T" (often found in Hohner diatonics). In the case of any other accordion, marks on the reeds serve to tell the mechanic (either the one building the accordion or the one fixing it) which reed bank a reed belongs to and which side is supposed to face in, and that's all. Not all reeds are marked. When I take out a reed that is unmarked, I often mark it myself and I can frequently see where previous mechanics have done the same.

Hot Air

Q: My accordion is leaky, does it need a new bellows?

A: There are lots of possible causes of air leaks, some of which are simple, most of which are repairable, and only a few of which require replacing the bellows. The most common cause of air leaks is loose hardware - strap hangers, bellows straps and their snaps, or even missing bellows pins. The next most common cause is a deteriorated bellows gasket, which is replaceable. Problems with the keyboard or bass machine can also cause leaks, most commonly when a valve or valves are not seating properly. Leaks around the valves can be an easy fix or they can be a sign that your accordion needs a costly overhaul. Only your accordion mechanic knows for sure. Sometimes poor quality reeds can make the accordion feel leaky when you play because it takes more air to make them respond. As for the bellows themselves, if they aren't actually torn or punctured, they can almost always be salvaged.

When Your Accordion Takes a Dive

Q: I dropped my accordion and it has a crack in the cabinet, can it be fixed?

A: The answer is usually yes - though I don't recomend using your accordion for a shot put! Accordions fall more often than you might think, particularly in shipping. A crack in the cabinet can usually be reglued. A crack in the plastic finish on the cabinet will have to be patched. (If your accordion is black, a black patch can be designed that will be fairly unnoticable - other patches require more creativity.) Bent grills can often be straightened. Stuck and bent bass buttons can be fixed. Don't give up hope, but do take the accordion to a professional and confide what happened.

Q: What if I dropped my accordion and it doesn't look damaged?

A: There may be hidden damage. Dropping your accordion can, for instance, crack the wax that holds the reeds into the reed blocks, causing the reeds to fall out. Some repair may be necessary. This is why it is important to have your accordion looked over if it has taken a hard bump.

Not Doing It Yourself

Q: What are your most difficult repairs?

A: The thorniest jobs almost always involve trying to straighten out botched amateur repairs. Do-it-yourself repairs often don't solve the initial problem, and cause new problems that may be even worse from the use of improper tools, methods and materials. It is as if the last person to change a flat tire on your car welded the wheel onto the axle and misplaced the lug nuts, so that no one can ever change that tire again. Sometimes a customer shows up with his or her accordion sorted into various boxes and bags - having tried to make a complicated repair and gotten lost on the way. Yes, I can take a bag filled with 120 bass buttons and figure out where they all go, but it is a shame if the original problem was something I might have fixed in a few minutes. That said, if you've already taken the plunge, and you and your accordion need to be rescued from your good intentions, your repairperson is there to help.

Buyers Proverb:

The security of knowing who you are buying from, and knowing the history of the accordion, is worth half the price of the accordion.

Accordion answer man Boaz Rubin is a professional repairman based in Oakland. Send your accordion-care questions to Boaz care of this newsletter or email Boaz at: schmatte@well.com. Boaz Accordions will have an exhibit booth at the Cotati Accordion Festival, so stop by and say hello!

For Sale 20 lb. MIDI Accordion & Roland RA90 Sound Module

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Portola Valley, Ca. 94028.

La Bellow Notte

By: Tom Torriglia

As the sponsor of National Accordion Awareness Month (June) each year I try to focus the media's and the public's attention to the accordion and how much the accordion is growing in popularity and acceptance as a mainstream instrument.

This past June, I wanted to put together an event that would not only showcase the accordion, but also raise money for a local non-profit organization, Music in Schools Today. (Music in Schools Today assists school music programs with funding and instruments).

The result was La Bellow Notte (Night of the Accordion) which was held Thursday, June 25. During La Bellow Notte, 11 accordionists performed at 11 San Francisco restaurants (one performer per restaurant). The accordionists donated their time and talent and the hope was that the appreciative diners would put something into the "tip" jar. All the tips would be donated to Music in Schools Today.

So, just who participated in La Bellow Notte and where did he or she perform? Ron Borelli/Zazie (941 Cole St.), Bob Berta/ Bruno's (2389 Mission St.), Lou Soper/Caesar's (2299 Powell St), Don Nurisso/Carta (1772 Market St.), Dennis Stoscher/Cafe de la Presse (352 Grant Ave.), Odile Lavault/ Cafe Claude (7 Claude Lane), Sharon Walters/Firefly (4288 24th St.), Reno Pucci/Fuoco (1001 Guerrero St.), Dominic Palmisano/Pier 40 Roastery (Pier 40), Valarie Morris/Volare (561 Columbus Ave.), and I performed at Buca di Beppo (855 Howard St.).

I want to congratulate and thank all the accordionists who performed at La Bellow Notte and I invite everyone to patronize the great restaurants that participated.

Anytime an event is produced for the first time, you quickly discover what works and what doesn't work. There were many things that worked great and as a result, the hills (of San Francisco) were filled with the sweet sound of music emanating from accordions throughout the entire evening.

Ron Borelli had the greatest success at raising awareness and money through his unique presentation about the accordion and his performance. Unfortunately, I think I held up the rear with the least money raised.

For next year I plan to produce another La Bellow Notte. I don't know if it will be the same type of event as this year's event, but it will be some type of event that will focus positive attention on the accordion and help raise some money for school music programs.

I look forward to your ideas for a spectacular La Bellow Notte next year and hopefully your participation either as a performer or assistant. I can be reached at 415 440 0800.

For information about Music in Schools Today, they can be reached at 415 392 9010.

Soap Box Racers and Accordions Invade Menlo Park

by Tom Torriglia

As part of the huge Sandhill Challenge, a soapbox derby being held on the morning (between 8:00am and 9:00am) of September 20, 1998 the event organizers are also trying to put together an Accordion Invasion of Menlo Park. This will be your chance to blast out a version of Lady of Spain with at least 499 other accordionists. The event organizers are going to attempt to grab the title in the Guinness Book of Records for the largest number of accordionists in one place at one time anywhere in the world. The minimum number of accordionists must be 500; so, we could really use your help. To be part of the extravaganza, send your name and daytime phone to jamis@buckswoodside.com or call (650)851-5424. You can also contact Tom Torriglia at (415)440-0800 or at belloblade@aol.com to register or to get more information. You can get further information about the Sandhill Challenge at WWW.Sandhill.org. Ron Borelli is the Accordion Invasion Musical Director. (Editors note: This is the same day of the annual BAAC Picnic...but you will be able to make the event and still attend the picnic.)

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4 Park Manor Drive, Daly City, Ca. 94015 (510)450-5766

Send all newsletter-related communications to: Bob Berta -Editor

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If you would like to play at a meeting contact Ed Massolo at (650)589-8409