

## Annual Club Picnic and Menlo Park Accordion Invasion a Huge Success

by Bob Berta for Events Committee

The Annual BAAC Picnic proved to be a success with outstanding weather, great music and food. Thanks to the Event Committee and the many volunteers the barbecue proved to be a hit with lots of tasty bbq chicken, home made beans, green salad, rolls and dessert. To quench everyones' thirst an ample supply of beer and soda and bottled water proved welcome.

This was the first time the event was held at *Nature Friends* park in the Oakland Hills. This proved to be a spectacular spot with gorgeous views of the surrounding forest, SF Bay and the cities of Oakland and San Francisco. The facility had lots of picnic tables in clusters under the shade trees which allowed various groups to jam without bothering other groups. A big hit was the huge outdoor wooden dance floor with a stage which provided ongoing dance music courtesy of various volunteers throughout the day. The weather cooperated with a comfortable shirt sleeve temperature of around 75 degrees with a barely perceptible breeze to keep the dancers happy.

An informal survey of the attendees indicated that this was the BEST picnic BAAC has had to date and there was an enthusiastic recommendation from all that we use the same spot next year.

While some of us arrived in the early hours to setup the sound system, stoke the barbecue, and other duties, many club members first attended the *Menlo Park Sandhill Challenge and Accordion Invasion* prior to attending the picnic. This first time event combined a soap box derby with a much anticipated attempt at a *Guiness Book Of World Records* attempt.

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Don't forget to renew your membership in BAAC \$25

BAAC Recognition
Dinner at
Irish Cultural Center
Sat. - Oct. 17, 1998
see page 5 for details

#### **Mark Your Calendars**

October 5 (Monday). BAAC General Meeting and 3rd annual Dessert Night.7:00-9:30pm at the Donsworth Hall in SF at 22nd Ave. and Eucalyptus. The theme is "Ethnic Night" featuring, Roberto Rosa, Richard Yaus, Catherine Morshead, The Joe Smiell Button Box Group and Lenart Kulberg. Bring desserts to share with 8 of your fellow BAAC members. Coffee provided by BAAC.

Oct. 11 (Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? Bring your accordion! See page 3 for a map.

October 11 (Sunday). French music workshop with Henri DuCharme. 2:00-4:00pm. At BOAZ accordions in Oakland. \$25 fee. Call 510-653-6983 for reservations.

Oct. 12. (and every second Tuesday). Meeting of the Golden State Accordion-Aires. 7:00pm. Pietro's No.2. 679 Merchant St. Vacaville. Ca.

Oct. 14 (Wednesday). 7:30pm. BAAC Board Meeting at Ed Massolo's home at 612 Lassen in So. San Francisco. Guests welcome.

October 17 (Saturday). BAAC Annual Recognition Dinner and Dance at the Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco. See page 5 for details and registration coupon.

Oct. 19 (and every third Monday). Meeting of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods. 7:00pm. Volpi's in Petaluma.

Oct. 24 (Saturday). 8:00pm Trio Voronezh appearing at Dinkelspiel Aud.

Cont. page 2

Calendar cont. from page 1

at Stanford. This group from Germany performs on Bayan, Domra and double bass balalaika in a program including Russian folk music, Bach and Gershwin. This group has performed to much critical acclaim at the Oregon Bach Festival where they sold out three concerts! Tickets available at (650)725-ARTS.

Oct. 25 (Sunday). 2:00pm Dance and Music Kaleidoscope featuring Ensemble International. At the Montgomery Theatre in San Jose at Market & San Carlos Streets. This 2 hour concert will include folk music and dancing of Switzerland, Germany, France, and Austria. Sponsored by the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs and part of the Performing Arts Series. For info. on program and ticket sales call (408)395-8026.

November 2 (Monday). BAAC General Membership Meeting at the Moose Lodge in Colma. The theme is "Harvest Festival Night" featuring two great bands...Steve Balich Band, Domenic Saso Band plus Frank Panacci and Ed Massolo strolling accordions. Substantial free fiinger food and free coffee provided by BAAC. Bring your dancing shoes!

November 8 (Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? 'Bring your accordion! See page 3 for a map.

November 8 and 15th (Sunday). Mike Zampiceni workshop on the Fundamentals of Jazz and Blues Improvisation. 2:00-4:00pm. At BOAZ accordions in Oakland. \$25 per day fee. Call 510-653-6983 for reservations.

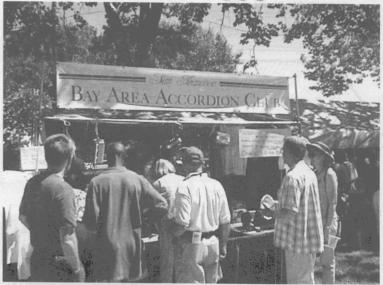
BAAC Ensemble practice first and third Wednesday of each month at Moose Lodge in Colma at 7535 Mission St. from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Frank Montoro (650)574-4757 for additional information.

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.





Cotati '98 BAAC Booth



The BAAC Jam Tent Was a Popular Spot at Cotati



Future Accordionist....and BAAC Member?

With a surprisingly effective public relations campaign, the event proved to be a media success story for BAAC and the Event organizers. I was delighted at the amount of preevent publicity. Many members remarked that they had heard announcements on various radio stations and seen announcements in various print media including major newspapers like the SF Examiner and SJ Mercury News. While traveling over to the picnic in the early hours I was pleased to hear a local big AM radio station promoting the event. The Guiness people will need to review our record attempt before deciding if our attempt at the new record was successful, but preliminary reports indicate that there were indeed hundreds of accordionists there. The record attempt was to have 500 accordionists all playing "Lady of Spain" at the same time.

You can image my surprise and delight when arriving home after the picnic and turning on the CBS early evening news I heard announcements of an upcoming coverage of a special accordion event. Later they aired not just once but TWICE in the same broadcast clips of the accordionists playing that "anthem" of accordionists "Lady Of Spain". And I was also delighted that the event was shown without the usual accordion put-downs. Later that night, on the 10:00 news, the FOX TV network also had extended coverage. While I didn't check the other major networks, I suspect that the Event was covered by other stations also. Upon arriving at work the following day many co-workers commented that they saw the accordion coverage and wanted to know if our club was involved (which I proudly replied YES).

So a BIG thanks to all the members who made both the Picnic and the Accordion Invasion such a huge success. Your continued enthusiastic support of our Club is evidence of why our club is held in such high esteem in the accordion community both in the US and throughout the world!



## MEMORIAL

The Board, on behalf of all BAAC members wishes to express their condolences to Vince Cirelli and his family on the passing of his wife, Ann.

#### Contact Phone #s for Officers:

Pres. Marian Kelly (650)854-1896 Vice Pres. Frank Schlotter (510)339-8657 Treasurer Josephine Hornbrook(650)591-3009 Record. Sect. Val Kieser (510)531-4836

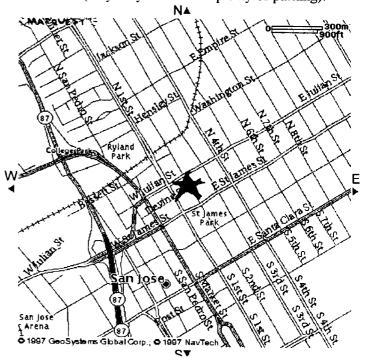
# "Do You Know the Way to San Jose?"

by Bob Berta

Want to have fun and enjoy a group of enthusiastic accordion lovers in San Jose? Taking a cue from that old pop tune, I decided to "Find My Way to San Jose"....that is the San Jose location of the BAAC alternative meeting site.

Since I was on vacation and had nothing else to do at home (well maybe I could have done some more chores from my "honey-do" list) I thought I would travel down to the site of BAAC's alternative meeting site for its second-Sundayof-the-month get-together at the Germania Restaurant. I have been hearing a lot from past attendees about the enthusiasm and fine accordion playing at those first couple of meetings. The ambience is quite different from the traditional BAAC San Francisco meetings. The atmosphere is a more relaxed informal setting. As people arrive they inform the groups leaders if they would like to play for a few songs. After hearing those volunteers the members break up into several groups. Some are mostly interested in conversation, others create spirited jam sessions and throughout the afternoon members wander out to the bar for a mug of their favorite German brew and later some fine German food. You will find yourself wanting to participate in playing your favorite songs and joining in on the jam sessions as I did.

A poll of the members in attendance was held with plenty of positive feedback and it looks like this meeting will become an ongoing attraction for the many members in the San Jose area. If you would like to see what the group is all about I suggest you use the following map to "Find Your Way to San Jose" (very easy to find and plenty of parking).



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San Lorenzo

## **South Bay**

Mike Zampiceni
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Sunnyvale
408-734-1565

#### Peninsula

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San Carlos (650)365-1700

Lou Soper Chords make playing easier! Every Tuesday 3:00 to 6:30pm Moose Club - Colma Phone 510-792-8765



A CHROMATIC ACCORDION

## **President's Message**

by Marian Kelly

Dear BAAC Members and Friends,

Thank you so very much for your quick responses to the membership/election/picnic/dinner mailer which we sent you last month. You probably know that BAAC uses my address as our club's permanent address. So I'm the lucky one who gets to empty all those envelopes every day and who recognizes how wonderful you have been in responding. That makes our jobs so much easier - - thank you so very much.

And I want you to know that we really appreciate the comments that you make on your membership renewal forms. We appreciate them, but I must tell you that sometimes it's difficult to know just what to do with them. The reason is that on those forms, we often receive completely opposing opinions. For instance, one person says that they love it when we have guests artists...in the next envelope comes the statement that we should avoid guests almost completely, and especially those from Europe. One person believes that we shouldn't have to charge at the door in at San Francisco meetings, since we already pay dues; the next says that the accordion club meetings are by far the greatest bargain in town. One person doesn't want to hear anything classical, one wants more jazz, one says we never do Cajun, another wants Klezmer.

I'm sure you see my drift here. We're a very diverse group, and we'll never manage to please everybody. But we'll try. We'll do our best always to be responsive to a majority opinion and to include as many of the minority opinions as we can manage. So we encourage you to support our choices even as you suggest that we may want to reconsider them. And we also ask that you keep talking to us.

Our bylaws tell us that our purpose is to promote the accordion both among and beyond ourselves. Different members interpret that mission in different ways, of course. But it's pretty clear that we all need to be ready to encourage accordion music in lots of forms, playing, as our Favorite Instrument does so well, all kinds of music. In particular, seems to me, we should try to place emphasis on music that the general public enjoys and is therefore more likely to pay attention to.

So long as I'm talking about the mail, I want to tell you that one thing about that mail bothers me quite a bit. We have received at least a dozen envelopes without a return address and with only a ballot enclosed. That means that members are choosing not to renew their membership in our club, but aren't telling us why they made that choice, and aren't giving us the opportunity to call and talk to them about it. That saddens me. I want to know why folks choose not to rejoin, because perhaps I can do something about it. If any of you see yourselves in this paragraph, please know that I'd really appreciate it if you'd phone me and let me know why you made the decision that you did. I'm at (650) 854-1896.

The balloting has produced two new board members for the upcoming fiscal year. Gwyn Lister and Dominic Palmisano will now become board members beginning at our October board meeting. They replace Ed Massolo and Herb Meier, both of whom have been marvelous, hard-working contributors. But let's put Ed and Herb on notice right now.....we know how to find you guys. You're much too terrific for us to let you slip away. Boquets and hearty thanks to you both!

And finally a very special thanks to all who helped make Cotati-98 such a success for BAAC. The Event Committee did an outstanding job but they couldn't have done it without all the volunteers.

## **Annual Recognition Dinner**

by BAAC Events Committee

On Saturday, October 17 at 6pm, we will be holding our Third Annual Recognition Dinner, our chance to thank the outgoing officers and Board members for their service, and welcome the new. Our regular venue, the Irish Cultural Center at 2700-45th Ave. in San Francisco's Sunset District, provides a dance floor for our enjoyment; Frank Montoro and Herb Meier will be providing the dance music. We will also be honoring members who have made outstanding contributions to the club.

Our menu choices this year are Braised Short Ribs and Chicken Jerusalem; the price for either choice is only \$25 per person. Tickets must be purchased by Oct. 15; contact Bob Berta for details (510)450-5766. Join us for food, music, dancing and fun! Make your reservations by using the following coupon:

BAAC OFFICERS' INAUGURAL DINNER, SATURDAY, OCT. 17 - 6 PM/whenever  Lrish Cultrual Center  2700 45th. Ave.  San Francisco (across from the SF Zoo at Sloat Blvd.)			
NAME:		PHONE:	
TOTAL NUMBER OF T Menu Selections: Braised Short Rib	\$25 per person	Please return this coupon with a check made out to BAAC with payment by October 10. Mail to: Bob Berta 4 Park Manor Dr. Daly City, Ca. 94015	
Chicken Jerusalem		( Daiyeny, ca 94015)	

# Flash: Petosa Announces new Reedless Accordion.

Petosa Accordions recently announced the addition of a reedless accordion to their product line called the S-2000 Millennium. This accordion is of their own design and is not the Cavagnolo reedless accordion from France.

## Flash: Myron Floren Suffers Stroke

On Friday Aug. 28th. Myron Floren suffered a stroke on stage while performing in Jamestown, New York. He had the stroke while performing, but would not quit until finishing the last number. He suffered no motor impairment. His speech was a problem, but it is now back. During further testing doctors found that he had colon cancer in the early stages and evidently he is well on his way to recovery. Myron's friends at BAAC wish him a speedy recovery. We are sure that Myron would appreciate your notes of encouragement by writing:

Myron Floren C/O Randee Floren 22728 Date Ave. Torrance, Ca. 90505

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-- John Light, accordionist for Over the Edge

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#### **Accordion to Boaz**

by Boaz Rubin

Customers who are new to the accordion often ask me if they can learn to play on their own. Many times such customers are on a tight budget or a tight schedule and are worried about the expense or inconvenience of taking lessons. I always tell them to take at least a few lessons from an experienced teacher to get started. Getting started on the right foot can make a big difference in the progress of a beginner and can help prevent misconceptions and bad habits from forming.

While a few lessons to get started will make a big difference, a long term program of study under any of the better teachers in the area (see page 4 for teachers list editor) can benefit even the most experienced student. Teachers not only help their students develop technique and style, they also convey accordion wisdom, lore, and culture to their students. I find that my customers who have several years of lessons under their belt tend not only to play better, but to appreciate and understand their instrument better. Their accordions are often of better quality and they tend to be better shoppers when it comes time to buy an instrument because they often have a clearer idea of what they are looking for and are better able to recognize quality and value in an instrument.

#### **Boogie with the Best**

I also recommend that my customers of all levels join the accordion clubs and the jam sessions (see calendar on page 1 and 2 for other club meetings and various ensembles - editor). Even a beginner can learn by watching or struggling to keep up on simpler tunes and making music in a social gathering is a natural way to find pleasure and inspiration to go home and practice.

#### What's that button do?

Button accordions of all types are gaining in popularity and many musicians who have grown up with the piano keyboard are a bit confused as to how they work and what advantage, if any, they might have. Here is the Cliff's Notes version of the button box.

#### Never the Twain Shall Meet.

Button accordions fall into two basic camps, diatonic, and chromatic. The chromatic accordion is a large button accordion with three or more rows of buttons. These buttons are arranged in a pattern of diagonal rows across the key board. As the musician plays the buttons in diagonal order the tones he gets follow each other in chromatic order. If there are more than three rows, the fourth button is the same note as the first button on the next row, the fifth is the same

as the second, etc. With this set up a musician can learn a tune in three rows and change keys simply by moving his hand the way a guitar player changes keys by changing frets or moving a capo. These accordions also allow for improved dexterity as the buttons are more compact than a piano keyboard and allow for more accuracy and speed in large leaps within the scale. These accordions come in the same reed configurations as piano accordions, i.e. most commonly two, three, or four sets of reeds in the right hand and four or five in the left with the same options for tunings like musette or dry etc.

#### Push Me Pull You

The diatonic accordion is typically a small accordion with one or more rows of buttons. Each row is usually a complete scale though there are exceptions where certain notes in the scale are left out. A two row diatonic would typically be suited to play in two keys, a three row in three keys, etc.. Diatonics are built so that each button supplies two different notes, one when the bellows is pushed in and one when it is pulled out. These accordions are light, easy to carry and relatively cheap. They are also capable of playing extremely fast figures as a change of notes can be achieved both by a movement of the fingers and a change of direction in the bellows. Diatonic accordions are often used in folk music contexts where the repertoire is heavily influenced by fiddle music and the best diatonic accordion players can begin to approach the speed of a fiddle.

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.

#### For Sale

20 lb. La Melodiosa MIDI Accordion and Roland RA 90 sound module. 3/5 sets of handmade reeds, 120 bass. Lou Casalnuovo (650)756-4670

## I Want to Buy

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## **Master Class for Accordion**

by Charles Magnante

Sometimes you get a real accordion treasure. The BAAC Editor recently was given one of those treasures by Sev Garcia. Sev was finishing his M.A. Music at the University of Denver 37 years ago and had the good fortune to attend a Master Class by Charles Magnante. Sev was able to share with BAAC memgbers a copy of the notes that he took during that class on Oct. 30th, 1961. Following are excerpts from those notes.

## SUGGESTED PERCENTAGE OF TIME FOR A TWO HOUR PRACTICE SESSION:

25% Method - Instruction books	30 min.
20% Study of piece(s)	24 min.
15% Phrasing, expression, legato/staccato	18 min
20% review	24 min.
10% Hanon	12 min.
5% Sight reading	6 min.
5% Scales and arpeggios	6 min.

#### BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF TEACHING

- -A teacher cannont lodge his knowledge into a student but can only stimulate him/her to learn.
- -The student must make an effort to understand be receptive.
- -The student must work not the teacher. This must be made clear from the beginning.
- -The student must LISTEN pay attention even to the smallest exercise.
- -Never call it an exercise; call it PLAY, call it FUN.
- -Analyze each student; we must use different teaching approaches with different students.
- -Enthusiasm must be displayed by the teacher.
- -The student is looking for "inspiration" at each lesson.

#### **BELLOWS CONTROL**

- -Avoid curvature towards the inside when pulling out. This will constrict the inner arm ligaments against the rear of the bass board.
- -PORTAMENTO can be played with the bellows by holding down the keys while changing the direction of the bellows from bottom to top.
- -LEFT HAND GUIDE: the 2nd knuckle of the left thumb on the front edge of the bass board.
- -Lift fingers high for all technical studies.
- -LEGATO practice of scales & argpeggios; emphasize the "under & over" of thumb & fingers.
- -Forearm should LEAD going up the scale with a little latitude of the shoulder (slight shoulder dip).

- -Going up hit a slanting blow on the keys (forward momentum).
- -Coming down the scale, the fingers lead the wrist. Hit a slanting blow downward but not head-on from above.
- -Keep thumb at the edge of the white keys (the distance of the thumb nail).
- -Lessen weight on keyboard for staccato (use weight of fingers only).
- -More weight = more legato.
- -Use a clawing/scratching finger action for shorter staccato.
- -Generally, keep fingers parallel to the keys on the same axis.
- -UNEVEN SCALES are the result of attempting to get the thumb passed under TOO FAST and thus shortening of one note.
- -MUSIC PHILOSOPHY Music as a means to social culture; to uplift culturally.
- -Approach accordion playing as a hobby, and as a means to popularity (Accordion bands are a must for this type of socializing).
- -COACHING helping to put the finishing touches on a piece. Polishing a piece. 60% emphasis on interpretation.

#### **MAGNANTE TRAITS**

His approach to playing tunes:

- -A time limit of 2 1/2 3 min. per tune. Maintains the interest of the audience.
- -Introduction: more use of left hand effects. 1/2 tone attacks on basses.
- -Let the audience know what you are playing. The melody must be prominent (at least for the first 8 bars).
- -2nd chorus; change register or shifts if it is repeated.
- -Recap: the 1st 8 bars at the end (reviewing melody).
- -Double the bass rhythm to create excitement.
- -Bellows shakes on the last chorus.
- -Finger nails; keep (cut) finger nails even with pads of fingers (as opposed to extremely short).
- -Chromatic scales: RELAX fall down into the keys.
- -Fast trill = lock fingers and spin/rotate the forearm.
- -Accurate glissandos: apply weight to keyboard to stop gliss. at a definite place. Start with a light weight but apply pressure upon stopping.
- -Bellows shakes: use center of gravity like a fulcrum. Do not let the bellows fall freely. Students should be at least 10 years old before doing bellow shakes.
- -Very important; relaxation of the left side of the body. Let the left elbow rest where it feels natural. Do not "hold" it as it will bind. Must be relaxed on low volume bellows shakes.
- -Use Vibrato and rubato to enhance performance.

#### **AD POLICY**

MEMBERS PAY \$5/ISSUE FOR SMALL ADS, \$10 FOR BUSINESS CARD SIZE ADS. (Ask about other sizes.) NON-MEMBERS PAY TWICE THE MEMBERS' RATE. SEND COPY AND CHECK TO: 4 Park Manor Drive, Daly City, Ca. 94015 (510)450-5766

Send all newsletter-related communications to:

Bob Berta -Editor

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Daly City, Calif. 94015

(510)450-5766

Deadline for each issue is the second Monday of the month.





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