

December, 2024

♪ ♪ *SFAC Accordion Circle* ♪ ♪ &
Mike Zampiceni

Sunday, December 15, 2024

♪ ♪ *SFAC Accordion Circle* ♪ ♪

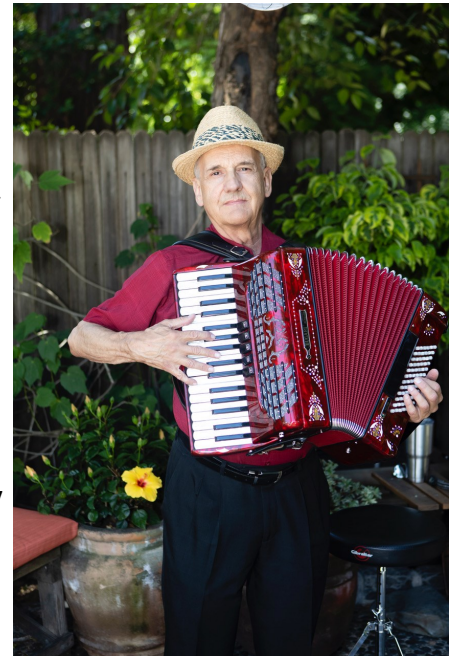
“OPEN MIC” SOLO OPPORTUNITIES

SFAC HOLIDAY “JAM BAND”

ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE

Chetcuti Community Room — Millbrae, CA

2:00 pm - 5:00 pm PST



to
of

Please bring your accordion and be ready to have fun in the *Holiday Edition* of the **Accordion Circle** meeting at the Chetcuti Community Center.

Accordionists of all skill levels are welcome - from beginners to seasoned experts, and anyone in between, and special folders of holiday music will be available. You may request a PDF file by sending an email to info@sfaceccordionclub.com. If you don't play the accordion, be sure to come anyway and sing along. 'Tis the season, and there will be plenty carols and holiday songs.

Mike Zampiceni will also be performing to bring us even more holiday cheer!

The Accordion Circle meeting will be streamed via ZOOM for those who wish to participate from afar. If you have prepared a piece or two that you would like to perform, please let Ken Schwartz know at info@sfaceccordionclub.com so that we hold a spot for you.



NOVEMBER EVENT SUMMARY

By Kenneth Schwartz

It was one of those memorable afternoons, with a presentation by Club member **Monica Ambalal** on the accordion culture in the Northern California Italian community and a terrific performance by new member **Duane Quenzel**.



Many of us know Monica as a Club member and talented accordionist, who just happens to also play a rare Excelsior accordion. At this club meeting we were treated to her academic side – formerly Professor and Department Chair of the music department and now Interim Dean of Allied Health and Public Safety (both at Merritt College in Oakland), cross-cultural and ethnomusicology researcher, and soon-to-be PhD (UC Santa Cruz). While working towards her PhD, Monica’s research has taken her to numerous sources,

including public and university libraries, oral histories, newspaper archives, extensive travel and more. Not surprisingly, Monica is an outstanding speaker. She gave us a glimpse of our local history - its past, present, and future - through a detailed presentation of the academic methods she utilized to bring this project to fruition. She presented a series of informative slides, some with embedded audio, which this summary can’t possibly capture, outlining her research methods.

Monica’s project involved 2 parts: historical documentation on the piano accordion in the San Francisco Bay Area and west coast since the 1880s, and contemporary field work through oral history, ethnographies and sound collections. She spoke to numerous individuals in the accordion community and visited West Coast field sites, stretching from Washington State to San Diego and, of course, Northern California. Numerous oral histories were obtained from individuals ranging from age 7 to 101. Local points of interest featured several North Beach buildings, including the Guido Deiro teaching studio (500 Columbus Ave), Colombo & Sons Accordion Factory (140 Columbus Ave, above what was the Purple Onion), and the Pezzolo studio on Union Street, as it was then and now. Families mustered the resources to purchase a new accordion for their budding stu-



Fieldwork, Italy

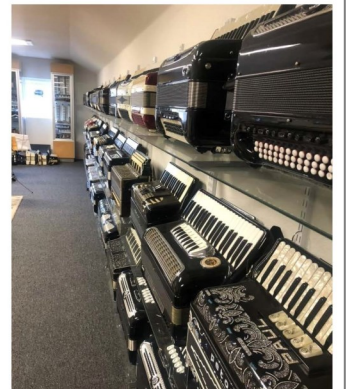
Fieldsite: Pigni Accordion factory—Castelfidardo (Ancona, IT)

Space: Pigni Accordion Factory in Castelfidardo, Ancona, IT. (December 15, 2023)

Liutaia artigiana (luthier-artisan): Alessia Ballarini

Paul Cain (Personal Collection), Prunedale, CA.

September 20, 2021



Place: San Rafael, CA
Maybe: Panama-Pacific Expo or club picnic
Date: ????
(Courtesy: SFPL Digital)



dents; a base 1950’s model Colombo cost \$700 USD, equivalent to over \$8000 today! There were numerous studios and over 80 accordion teachers in the SF Bay Area! Monica visited Castelfidardo, Italy, and met with Francesca Pigni at the Pigni accordion factory. High-end Castelfidardo-made accordions are still handmade using century-old techniques. The presentation featured a short video of the factory. While accordion production peaked during the golden age, Castelfidardo still has a future; there were over 30 workers in the factory

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when Monica (and her mom) visited. Monica fielded numerous questions from our Zoom attendees. Congratulations, Monica, and thank you for a terrific presentation!

Ken mentioned that the Club has in its possession a collection of Theodore Pezzolo's original handwritten sheet music, which was donated to the Club by Tom Torriglia.



New SFAC member, **Duane Quenzel** was made aware of the SFAC by member Pamela Tom. He studied accordion from 1954 to 1970, starting at age 3, and won his 1st competition at age 6! He started early by virtue of coming from a distinguished musical family. He has an older brother (6 years older) and a sister. His mother was a world-famous concert organist and pianist, who played all the major organs, including the John Wanamaker organ (1935-45), and previously played silent movie theaters. She wrote most of the music she performed in silent movie theaters, before Hollywood was born. She was the assistant organist at Wanamaker and was the organist of Constitutional Hall with the National Symphony orchestra (1959-1963). She had well over 300 organ and piano students but did not wish to be the teacher to her own children. Therefore Duane's brother was introduced to the guitar and studied with the famed Andrés Segovia. Young Duane wound up being introduced to his mother's other favorite instrument, the accordion! He studied under Mrs. Jean Smallwood, who was the pedagogue for all Central and South America, Frank Moliterre (duet accordionist with Frank Marocco), and Myron Floren.

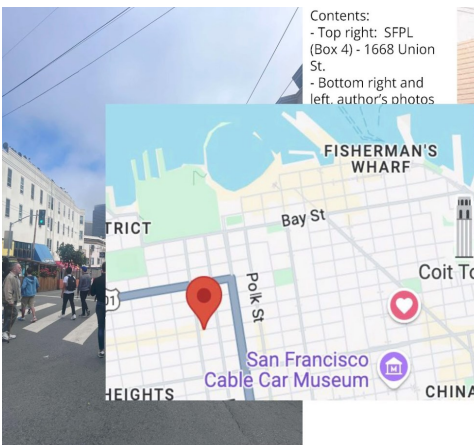
Duane studied and played throughout high school, at which time he volunteered to serve in the military. When he returned, there was no full-sized accordion waiting for him (see our November newsletter). He took a long sabbatical (50 years, in fact) but returned to the accordion after he retired in 2021. He visited Castelfidardo and was privileged to order and receive 2 Victoria accordions, a converter free bass and a Stradella. At our November meeting Duane played on his Victoria Piano Accordion Poeta V 5/5 with double cassottos. It's an exact duplicate of Frank Marocco's Poetta V.

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Duane rounded out the afternoon with a terrific performance! He had played some songs for us by way of Zoom at our October Oktoberfest Accordion Circle in Piedmont, but his performance inadvertently occurred during the intermission and could not be appreciated by all. For November's meeting he graciously recreated that performance, which included the *German National Anthem*, seguing to themes from *Beethoven's 9th* and ending with the famous *Beethoven's 5th Symphony* theme – all beautifully played on his Victoria. Next, Duane played Mason Williams' *Classical Gas*, Tommy Emmanuel arrangement. Duane was terrific and by request played an encore, *Perfidia*. Finally, Duane wowed us with a virtuoso rendition of *Abba's Dancing Queen*! Thank you, thank you, Duane! We look forward to hearing more from you!

Best Wishes for the Holidays to All!
Ken

PS: Much as I enjoy writing our SFAC event summaries, the club would be well served to enjoy other writing styles. Many of you have talent, so please don't be shy to volunteer! We'll provide the pen and ink!



Membership Report

Robert Cooperstein

We concluded our membership renewal drive on December 1, 2024. With all the numbers in, we can now state this was by far our most successful drive ever, with a stunning 94% renewal rate! In fact, we added more new members than we lost, so that we grew by 9% over the past year! Many of our members included donations, some rather substantial, along with their dues, bolstering our financial state and enhancing our ability to support various scholarship programs. So, in a word, **THANKS!**



New member **Richard Rauschmeier** kindly submitted a brief bio, and here it is.

A native of San Francisco, Richard now lives in Martinez with his wife and three children. With the additional time at home during COVID, he decided to pick up some of his old accordions after a long hiatus (in the photo he's center in front of Santa with his first 12-bass in 1978). His father was a professional accordion player in New York before coming west in the 50's which was the reason Richard initially began instruction under Reno Pucci forty-five years ago in the city. Now Richard's only goal is to work up the skills (and courage) to play in public again! He looks forward to meeting all the other local accordionphiles in person (or virtually).



SFAC member **Joe Domitrowich** is in the process of transitioning more strongly as a soloist, as JoeDLive, and a new website, joedlive.com. We have updated Joe's contact information in our list of performers. His new business card can be seen on page 8.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! – JANUARY 26TH, 2025 - LIVE FROM CHETCUTI COMMUNITY CENTER

We are delighted to announce that our first club meeting of 2025 will feature **Adrian Jost**, master of the accordion fellow traveler known as the bandoneón. It is a type of free reed instrument, specifically a concertina, that originated in Germany during the mid-19th century. It is characterized by its bellows-driven mechanism and button-based keyboard, distinguishing it from other similar instruments like the accordion. The bandoneón gained prominence in Argentina and Uruguay, becoming integral to the **tango** music genre.

Adrian Jost began his musical studies on accordion in Switzerland. At the age of 11, he began studying the Bayan with Fritz Tschannen and Stephane Chapuis. His formal collegiate studies were actually in the Sciences, in which he earned a B.S. degree.

In 1996, with a grant from the global electro-technology firm Landis & Gyr, Adrian pursued a Master's degree from Northwestern University, just outside of Chicago. It was here in the US Midwest that Adrian discovered tango and began applying his musical talents to learning the instrument that epitomizes the sound of this latin dance form - the **bandoneón**. In 2001, he co-founded **Trio Garufa**, a popular San Francisco based tango group that has enthralled audiences throughout the West Coast, Argentina, Colombia and Europe.

Adrian brings authentic emotional authority to tango music and is currently in collaboration with Argentinian pianist Pablo Estigarribia of Buenos Aires. Find out more by visiting: **Adrian's Website**, <https://adrianjost.com/>.



Community Building Meet-Up Recap

The November meet-up at Sports Basement-Bryant Street was a great success! Six accordionists and one enthusiastic supporter came together for a fun and casual gathering. We're happy to report that the elevator was working smoothly this time, making the experience even more enjoyable for all attendees.

These meet-ups are a great way to connect, jam, and learn from each other in a laid-back atmosphere. If you missed out, don't worry! The next one is scheduled for Monday, January 13th from 4-6PM (see poster at right)

Expect a lively time filled with music, snacks, libations, and a whole lot of good vibes. Whether you're looking to share a tune, pick up a new trick, or just enjoy the camaraderie of fellow accordion enthusiasts, these meet-ups are not to be missed.

Want to stay in the loop? To be added to the Google Drive folder with all the sheet music, or to get on the email list for future events, contact heidiseretan@gmail.com. We'd love to have you join us!

Looking forward to more music, laughter, and community in the New Year!

A NEW YEAR OF
ACCORDION!

JAN **13** MON ACCORDION JAM
4-6PM W/ HEIDI & ROSEMARY

1590 BRYANT STREET SAN FRANCISCO
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Robert Kennedy, Joseph Martin, Heidi Seretan, Rosemary Busher & Colette Ogata



A Memory of the Neronde Accordion School Christmas Program

By Lorna Anderson and Linda Anderson Sandoval

Submitted by Pamela Tom

My sister Linda and I studied at the Neronde Accordion School, 3013 L St. in Sacramento with Mr. Joe Neronde. In 1951, six-year-old Linda participated in a Christmas recital program.

Christmas and holiday performances did not include all 90+ students from the Neronde studio. Our yearly performance was always at the California State Fair with all students and a variety of groups of different ages and numbers performing together. (More about these groups in a future SFAC newsletter!) The Neronde Christmas Show was a one-time recital for the newer students.

Holiday music was taught at all grade levels using mimeographed sheets so that students would learn a variety of seasonal tunes to perform with confidence and a sense of joy.

We were encouraged to perform at Christmas programs in churches, schools, ethnic organizations, local holiday celebrations, and at family gatherings for the holidays.

Linda practiced *Silent Night* all year. Our Mom helped her at home so she would play confidently and perfectly. On the day of her Christmas recital program, Linda played her solo number perfectly as the final performer closing the show. Afterward, Linda said, "The concert was really good." Linda did herself proud. However, after this program, Linda stopped playing the accordion. She was tired of practicing *Silent Night*. (Just think about the challenge a young student faces when having to memorize a great number of songs for a holiday concert, it means a great amount of practice and challenges to one's musical memory.)

Linda preferred dancing to playing the accordion. She later took dancing lessons and is a terrific dancer. When she decided to transfer to dancing lessons, we returned the accordion to Mr. Neronde.

Merry Christmas to you all! May the season of music fill your heart with joy and bring you peace.



The Neronde School held a Christmas program at the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium. Linda is with her white accordion in the front row. Note the students' new Italian-made Neronde Accordions!

ACCORDION REPAIR WORKSHOP



On a chilly Tuesday evening in November, a few Club members gathered around an old accordion to take it apart and put it back together again. Club member Anand Joseph explained moving parts and demonstrated the problems that occur when an instrument is stored the wrong way. Those pesky reeds don't take too kindly to such treatment! Anand also showed us how to unstick a bass button, install a new gasket, and repair torn bellows. It was a great learning experience for all of us to see the guts of this decades-old accordion that had seen better days and was in need of a little TLC. Anand learned accordion repair from Valdet Jakubovic and has refurbished many instruments. And he generously shared this knowledge with us.



It is generally recommended that we not mess with an accordion, it is a delicate machine with many moving parts. In fact, there is technique involved in the very first step of simply removing the pins that hold everything together. Reassembly will go much better by following a few rules, but will quickly become a hot mess if those rules are not respected.

Again, the workshop provided an understanding and emphasized limitations. We discussed the costs and benefits of a "reduce, reuse and recycle" approach vs. the convenience of buying a new instrument that can provide years of enjoyment and won't smell bad or require expensive repairs. Anand also observed that restoring accordions took his time away from playing them.

Stay tuned for a second installment of Anand's Accordion Workshop. (Behold! We have another old, broken accordion to fix.) If you are interested in joining us, contact Rosemary at info@saccordionclub.com.



Sergey Terchyn, Anand Joseph, Fiona Lau & Rosemary Busher



Photo at left taken at the Christmas market in Nuremberg, Germany on 11/30

Submitted by Pamela Tom

Printed with permission from Mike Silvia



Ron Borelli, Accordionist

Contact information:

- Email: RONBORELLI@AOL.COM
- WEBSITE: RONBORELLI.COM
- TEXT/PHONE: 415-203-6700

SFAC Members Performing Around the Bay

RON BORELLI *San Mateo* - RonBorelli@aol.com
www.ronborelli.com

JOE DOMITROWICH *Entire SF Bay Area* –
Joe@JoeDLive.com or www.JoeDLive.com

ED GORZYNSKI, JR. *East Bay* -
edspolkas@yahoo.com

PAMELA TOM *Yolo & Solano Counties*
accordionpam@gmail.com

MIKE ZAMPICENI *East Bay & South Bay*
eclecticguy@comcast.net, www.mikezamp.com

ACCORDION INSTRUCTION

East Bay

- ◆ **Joel Weber** www.joelseastbayaccordionlessons.weebly.com/
- ◆ **Mike Zampiceni*** www.mikezamp.com
- ◆ **Anand Joseph*** 614-329-9384 (beginner students)

Peninsula/South Bay

- ◆ **Joe Simoni*** jsimoni2000@gmail.com, 650-867-1122
- ◆ **Mike Zampiceni*** www.mikezamp.com
- ◆ **Anand Joseph*** 614-329-9384 (beginner students)

Outside the Bay Area

- ◆ **Gail Campanella*** GailCampanella@gmail.com 805-895-0457 (Santa Barbara)
- ◆ **Bonnie Birch*** www.bonniebirch.com (Seattle)
- ◆ **Pamela Tom*** accordionpam@gmail.com (Davis)
- ◆ **Lorna Anderson*** 910-215-5757 (Pinehurst, NC)

* = remote lessons (ZOOM, Facetime, Skype) available

SFAC Newsletter Ad Policy

Members may place 1/8-page (business-card size) free of charge for one month each year.

Additional ads are \$10/issue or \$100/year.

Monthly ad prices **for members**:

1/8 page: \$10; 1/4-page: \$25; 1/2-page: \$50; Full-page: \$100.

Non-member rates are double.

Contact info@sfacaccordionclub.com

SFAC Board & Key Club Functions

Ken Schwartz, President
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Rosemary Busher, Vice-President
(510)220-2931, rosemary@busher.org

Paul Cain paulrussellcain@gmail.com

Robert Cooperstein (510)207-6009, drcoop@sbcglobal.net

Elaine Cooperstein (510)921-9323, elainedc@sbcglobal.net

Randall Hicks (510)750-6858, hickr01@sprintmail.com

Dominic Palmisano (Honorary) accord47@gmail.com

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Mike Zampiceni (408)569-2579, eclecticguy@comcast.net

Webmaster & Bookkeeping: Randall Hicks

Newsletter: Elaine & Robert Cooperstein, Pamela Tom, Rosemary Busher (and credited contributors each issue)

Accordion Rentals: Rosemary Busher

Live Meeting Sound & Amplification: Paul Cain

Live Meeting ZOOM camera & sound: Ken Schwartz

Membership Drive & Recordkeeping: Robert Cooperstein

Event Photography: Steve Mobia

SFAC Scholarships

Your Club has scholarship funds available to support accordion students studying with teachers who are SFAC members in good standing. Preference is given to students who demonstrate dedication to pursuing the study of the accordion.

Contact **Mike Zampiceni** for a scholarship application.
eclecticguy@comcast.net 408-569-2579



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President's Report

Kenneth Schwartz

What a year it's been! As we ring in 2025, the Club thanks you for your participation in so many wonderful events, activities, and even a picnic and street festival! The Club branched out to Piedmont and welcomed a whole new audience to enhance our mission. Zoom has enabled many to participate virtually. Many of you learned new songs, both as part of our jam groups and individual solos, so please keep them coming. And above all, thank you for your words of encouragement and membership; they mean a lot to the Club!



Happy Holidays!

🎀 Thank You, Donors! 🎀

Sincere Thanks to those who generously donate to support the SFAC. These members have made donations during our October 2024 – September 2025 membership year:

Paul Aebersold, Scott Anderson, Ron Borelli, Gail Campanella, Raymond Celentano, Robert & Elaine Cooperstein, Edward Crnich, Xavier and Candace de la Prade, Ed Gorzynski, Jr.; Arleen Johnson, Pamela Lister, Linda Lonay, Franco & Susan & Lorenzo Lucchesi, Nora Mazzara, Gerald McMahon, Steve Mobia, Laura Jean Niland, Colette Ogata, David Perry, Robert D. & Dil Pisani, Diana Prurucker, Tibor Sarkany, Don & Mary Savant, Kenneth Schwartz, James E. Shoemaker, Bill & Gloria Tapogna; Pamela Tom, Jane & Frank Tripi, Frank Venturelli, Barbara Winter

If you have donated and your name doesn't appear here, please contact elainedc@sbcglobal.net. We greatly appreciate the support and want to be sure you are recognized.

The San Francisco Accordion Club is a **501(c)(3)** tax-exempt charitable organization whose purpose is to enhance, promote and stimulate an appreciation for the accordion within the membership and throughout the general public. Donations are tax-deductible and gratefully accepted by using the **Donate** button at www.sfaccordionclub.com



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San Francisco Accordion Club

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c/o Cooperstein

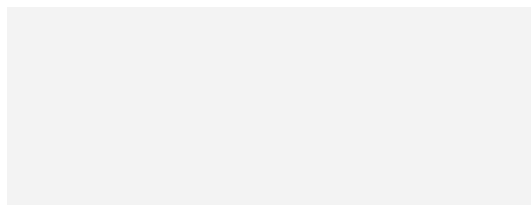
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Upcoming Events: *December 15 Accordion Circle—Holiday Edition!* Live in-person at Chetcuti
*January 26** Adrian Jost, Bandoneón - Live at Chetcuti (*4th Sunday-Note date change)

SFAC Sunday Meeting

❁ Holiday Accordion Circle ❁

& Mike Zampiceni

Sunday, December 15

Come for fun and great music!

2pm—5pm

All are encouraged to participate!

\$5 members/\$10 guests (Under 18 free with adult)

Millbrae Chetcuti Community Room

Civic Center Plaza/Library Plaza

450 Poplar Avenue, Millbrae, CA

SFAC members will receive ZOOM link via email

See email for details, or

contact info@sfaccordionclub.com



Chetcuti Community Room

SFAC Monthly Meetings:

Plenty of *free parking in Library lot*

Accessible location

Close to public transit

<https://www.facebook.com/SanFranciscoAccordionClub/>

