



# The San Francisco Accordion Club



*World's First Accordion Club 1912-2009*



*Newsletter for July 2009*

*The  
official instrument of San  
Francisco!*

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## Newsletter

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## President's Message

Dear Members and  
Friends,

It is with great sorrow that I announce the passing of one of our most beloved members, Clyde Forsman. He was one of a kind. His radiant personality, love of the accordion and generous spirit made him a very lovable person well known to our members and friends.

**As my "message" I** would like to pay tribute to Clyde by including the obituary that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle on June 12 by staff writer, John Koopman. We think Mr. Koopman did a wonderful job describing what made Clyde such a special person. We will miss him.

Frank Montoro

## Accordion aficionado Clyde Forsman dies

John Koopman, Chronicle Staff Writer

Friday, June 12, 2009



Clyde Forsman was well into his 70s before he became a sex symbol.

He was slight of build and the spitting image of legendary investor Warren Buffett. But there was no denying the man's sex appeal. He would

get on stage with his band, Those Darn Accordions, take off his shirt to show his enormous tattoos, and belt out his version of Jimi Hendrix's "Fire" or Rod Stewart's "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?" All of this done to the musical accompaniment of the very sexy accordion.

Mr. Forsman died June 5 of complications due to diabetes. He was 94.

Born on May 5, 1915, Mr. Forsman grew up on a farm in the San Joaquin Valley. His wife, Evelyn, said Mr. Forsman lived a rugged but simple existence in a small house with no electricity or running water. But, she said, the family was close and life was good.

At age 17, Mr. Forsman taught himself how to play the accordion. He took a few lessons along the way, but the accordion is not the kind of instrument that requires a lifetime of training.

Evelyn Forsman said her husband tried to join the military during World War II, but was turned down

## *President's message (continued)*

Accordion aficionado Clyde Forsman dies (continued)

because he had diabetes. He moved to San Francisco in 1942 to work as a boat builder at a yard in Marin County.

There he learned woodworking and carpentry. Forever a tinkerer and good with his hands, Mr. Forsman loved to build things, and he loved to figure out how old things worked. Those two interests came together a few years later when he landed a job with the city of San Francisco, working in the cable car barn, where he helped restore and rebuild the famous vehicles.

Throughout his life, however, there was always the accordion and Mr. Forsman's favorite music.

"He was good, but he was not a virtuoso," Evelyn Forsman said. "He had a lovely voice. That was probably his best instrument. He was a tenor, and sang like an Irish tenor. Very clear and sweet."

Mr. Forsman loved any music associated with the accordion, and was well versed in the music of the Midwest and Europe. They say he played a mean rendition of the "Beer Barrel Polka."

"Clyde was a legend in the accordion world," said Linda Seekins, a founding member of the group Those Darn Accordions. "He played in his first band, the Whiskey Flat Hillbillies, based in Coulterville, in 1932. He never stopped playing."

In 1989, when Seekins and some friends put together Those Darn Accordions, Mr. Forsman showed up with his instrument. Seekins said his enthusiasm was so great, he was invited to play with the band. What was supposed to be a one-time gathering of accordion aficionados turned into a long-lasting gig, and the band went on to play throughout the Midwest and Europe.

Mr. Forsman soon became the face of the band. Fans would show up just to watch him in action. It wasn't just his musical abilities, Seekins said. People just loved to see the energy of a man in his 70s, then 80s and 90s, getting up and playing funky rock 'n' roll and having a good time. He would play for awhile, then put down the instrument and sing, very straight-laced, "Let me stand next to your fire," as if channeling

Hendrix himself. Sometimes he'd remove his shirt.

"I could always see the audience nudging each other when he put down his accordion and got up to sing," said Seekins, who is also known as Big Lou, the accordion princess. "They went completely berserk when he removed his shirt and showed off his full-body tattoos."

With that notoriety came the inevitable groupies. Women would throw room keys and undergarments on stage when Mr. Forsman did his thing. A video of his act on Youtube.com shows him smiling and examining a bra as the accordions riffed and the crowd went wild.

Evelyn Forsman said he took the fame in stride, and never took it seriously. "He was supremely faithful," she said.

Mr. Forsman is survived by his wife; a brother, Chuck Forsman of Roseville; daughter Victoria Forsman of California; and sons Emil and Elliott Forsman, both of San Francisco.

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## A Memorial Gathering

Mrs. Forsman invites club members to share in a musical memorial for Clyde on Sunday, August 2, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market Street (cross street: Sanchez) in San Francisco. **Given Clyde's love for and influential involvement in the musical scene in the Bay Area, rather than remembering Clyde with verbal tributes, Mrs. Forsman has requested that this be a musical gathering and invites attendees to bring along their accordions or other instruments and play or sing a piece or two. Those who knew Clyde will know that nothing would have pleased him more. Think what a huge smile it would put on Clyde's face for everyone to join in a rousing chorus of the Beer Barrel Polka—Cotati style!**

# Something Familiar, Something New

## June's Musical Meeting

The musical program was, as always, very diversified. With Michael Sanossian setting the upbeat mood with his excellent pre-meeting music, everyone was in a good mood when Salane Schultz started off the program with some terrific and familiar Latin numbers. Salane usually is "Salane & Friends," meaning she plays several instruments and puts on a one-person show. This time she left most of her "friends" home and demonstrated what she has learned from Lou Jacklich by playing *La Paloma* in two keys; *La Cumparsita*; *El Choclo*; *Tico-Tico* and *El Cumanchero Cubano* (Lou Jacklich's arrangement).



Michael Sanossian

Accordion Babes calendar.

"Shalymar" is a composite of "Sharon-Lynn-Marian," and is the new name for this very accomplished trio of Sharon Greyhosky, Lynn Ewing and Marian Kelly. They appeared twice in this program, first as duets featuring two of the three, and a solo. First Lynn and Marian played a lovely Frank Marocco arrangement of the beloved French piece *Domino*, followed by Stas Venglevsky's *Autumn Illusions*. Their last piece was a delightful Marocco arrangement of *Mademoiselle de Paris*.



The Shalymar Trio:  
Sharon, Lynn and Marian

The next duo from the Shalymar trio were Sharon and Marian, who played a "Concert Schottisch" (*Silver Slippers*) arranged by the late Joe Morelli, known for his terrific arrangements. Then Sharon played a lively solo arrangement of *There'll Be Some Changes Made*.

Lynn and Sharon then played a duet of Frosini's beautiful *Olive Blossoms*, followed by Joe Smiell's arrangement of *Anitra's Dance* from Grieg's *Peer Gynt*.

We were then treated to a presentation by surprise guests from the Accordionists and Teachers Guild (ATG), Dee Langley (ATG President) and Michele Boddicker Scheffler (ATG board member). They informed us just what the ATG is about and the coming "accordion renaissance." Their Convention for 2009 will take place in Minneapolis August 13-16—and here in San Jose in 2010! Michele, Dee, Lynn Ewing and Mary Tokarski (of the K Trio) form the site committee for



Salane Schultz with her "best friend"

Salane was once a student of the late Lou Soper, whom she missed a lot as she found herself "in limbo" with no teacher—until she began lessons with Lou Jacklich, where she has made lots of progress. Thanks, Salane, for starting off the program in such a colorful and delightful way. (Salane confided that she had hoped to play *Flight of the Bumblebee* for us but we ran out of time. Play it for us next time, Salane—we'll be waiting to hear it!) By the way, Salane was "Miss February 2010" in the

# Something Familiar, Something New

## June's Musical Meeting (continued)



Michele Boddicker Sheffler  
ATG Board Member

next year's convention. What a terrific opportunity for those of us for whom it just isn't feasible to travel to a far-off state to attend an event. Michele talked about accordion playing competitions in general and how they came about, how they are judged, the different categories, etc. It was very interesting.

Dee then demonstrated, using Lynn's accordion, the very tricky Bulgarian rhythms, especially 11 beats to the measure and then 22 beats. Very impressive! Dee is a real pro in this type of music. Then she wowed us with the familiar Italian *La Compagnola*—played faster and faster until I thought it couldn't possibly be played any faster—and then she played it even *faster*. Wow!



Dee Langley  
ATG President

After the break with Tuti's wonderful food with beautiful presentation, the program resumed with a reprise of Shalymar, only this time as the full trio of Sharon, Lynn and Marian. In their very precise manner, they played *Shenanigans* by Stas Venglevsky (with shouts of "Oh Man!" and "Oh Yeah" to add to the light-

hearted and fun feeling of the piece). They followed with an original by Joe Smiell: *Concert Etude for 3 Accordions*. Their final piece was *Carioca*, Carl Fortina arrangement, with Gus Greyhosky as percussion. Congratulations to all of you for a terrific job!

Last on the day's musical program was The Wild Rovers, a group of seven young men playing various instruments, and what a show they put on! The songs were mostly distinctly Irish, loaded with humor and beautifully presented, with terrific vocals. Some of the pieces were: *When the Ship Comes In*, *Wild Rover*, *Rovin'*, *Tell Me Ma*, *Raggle Taggle*, *St. Anne's Reel*, *Drunken Lullabies*, *Paddy's*, *Fisherman's Blues*, *Rover's Horni*—and many others. Players were: Martin Sweet (vocals, rhythm guitar, whistle); Todd Kitch (accordion); Devon Avey (guitar, mandolin, bouzouki, banjo, whistle); John Davies (fiddle, banjo); Ryan Zash (Bass); Jeffrey Trabucco (bodhrán, vocals, whistle).



The Wild Rovers: To see more about the Wild Rovers visit: <http://www.myspace.com/wildrovers7>

Val has to brag a bit: Jeff Trabucco is my nephew. He played the bodhrán (Irish frame drum), the whistle and did some vocals, and I was so proud! I had never heard the Wild Rovers before—none of us had—and we didn't know what to expect. Well, I knew they'd be good, but oh boy, they were amazing and left everyone in a great mood. They will definitely be invited back!

Val



# It's a Barbecue



## Mark the Date !

The San Francisco Accordion Club Presents the  
Annual Barbecue Picnic



When: Sunday, August 16th, Noon to ??? Lunch Served at 1:00

Where: Oyster Point Yacht Club

Menu: Chips and Salsa,  
Barbecued Chicken,  
Pasta Salad,  
Green Salad  
and Dessert



Cost: \$12 for Adults 17 and Over  
\$ 6 for Children 10–16  
Free for Children 9 and under

Watch for Sign-Up details at the July Musical Meeting and in the August Newsletter

**The annual picnic is an “open mic” event and members are encouraged to play.** Solos, duets, trios - all are welcome. Please contact Val Kieser in advance (510) 531-4836; vtkacc@ifn.net if you would like to play. Performances must be limited to 10 minutes, to give as many performers as possible the opportunity to play.



## *Lou Jacklich Plays* (continued from the June Newsletter)

As promised last month, here is the conclusion to Dr. Anderson's biography of Lou Jacklich. If you will recall from the June Newsletter, we left off with Lou having entered the service and having given accordion lessons to an Admiral in the Navy, who insisted on holding the instrument upside down.

### ***“Lou Jacklich Plays”...And Accordion Fans Listen***

By Scott Anderson, MD, PhD

#### *Part 2*

After receiving his honorable discharge, Lou sought post-graduate musical training at the Candell Conservatory of Music, where Lou wore two hats as he paid for his studies by teaching at the same time. Lou departed, however, after it became apparent that sitting in music classes was not preparing him to be a musician. Like Miles Davis, who left Julliard for a jazz career, Lou continued his lifelong learning in the unforgiving “School of Hard Knocks,” (Photo 3). This dedication to life-long learning is typical for Lou, a man



**Photo 3: One of Lou's Albums from the 1950s**

who still practices daily, reads biographies of Beethoven and Nelson Riddle, and expresses avid interest in

all things musical. No wonder Lou's music school, the Jacklich School of Music in Castro Valley, was one of the busiest in the 1950's and 1960's, the heyday of accordion teaching. Lou's school boasted eight teachers and 300 students. The five accordion bands connected to the Jacklich School of music performed on tour from Denver to Salt Lake City. Unfortunately, the advent of Elvis Presley and then the British Rock Invasion put a dent in the popularity of the accordion in our country.

Making it Big. As Lou also describes the pivotal decade of the 1960's, “the rock musicians thumbed their noses at the Musicians' Union.” As a result, gigs that were once reserved for live bands of a certain size no longer existed. The culmination of this trend is the party of today, where a disc-jockey with loud speakers earns as much as a live band once did, with none of the talent. Lou, supporting a wife and three kids, soldiered on past the roadblocks of the rock era...“as long as the check cleared.” This included a gig at a nudist camp, where he declined to disrobe, claiming “I might pinch myself with the bellows.” And a funeral, where he was asked to play Beer-Barrel Polka for the deceased. And the time he was forced to repair his punctured car tire in full Oktoberfest garb. Or his jobs strolling at the Fairmont Hotel, when the violinist got punched out for “playing too close” to a tough guy's girlfriend. I guess “the School of Hard Knocks” is both a literal and figurative expression.

En route to the success of the Capital Record years, Lou auditioned for the Lawrence Welk Show. Mr. “A-One-And-A-Two” was dismissive, however, of Lou's high technology instrumentation, which included pioneering MIDI equipment and sophisticated amplification on stage. Many of Welk's musicians, when on their own, were honored to appear at gigs with Lou. Jacklich performed at up to 17 fairs, from Eureka to LA, with many Welk veterans. Lou recalls, specifically, the great tap dancer Arthur Duncan, and the famous Champagne Lady Norma Zimmer. It is a testament to Lou's gutsy adaptability and work ethic that he has never strayed from his career goal of being a musician. Lou's original

## Lou Jacklich Plays (continued)

compositions include *La Promesa de Amor*, a tango inspired by a musical trip to Mexico. He also arranged extensively for his accordion orchestras.

A Musician, and Yet More. Lou Jacklich is more than a musician. He is an oral historian of 20<sup>th</sup> century music, culture, and language. Lou represents a living window into an era of gentility and grace that is rarely encountered in America today. But, above all, Lou is an exceptional teacher and a fine human being. If you take lessons from Lou, he will draw upon his experiences to help you achieve your musical goals. Lou is uncompromising in his search for excellence, but also patient and practical in his approach to student concerns. **Lou's best known album, after all, is called "Lou Jacklich Plays," not played.** As an ongoing legend in accordion circles, Lou will hopefully continue to inspire a younger generation of accordionists, for years to come (Photo 4). That would be "a good bit of business."



Photo 4: Lou Jacklich and Jane Tripi at SF Accordion Club Performance 2009

In preparation of the article, Scott wishes to make the following acknowledgements: Thank you to Lou Jacklich for recollections of a lifetime devoted to his art form. Suzie Hirigoyen offered superb editorial comments, encouragement, and photographs 1,2,3. Nick Capozzoli, MD, kindly reviewed the draft. Val Kieser provided Photo 4. I take full responsibility, how-

ever, for the final version, and any inadvertent errors therein.

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Scott Anderson, MD, PhD is a man who wears many hats. You may assume he is an accordionist, and I think it is evident he is a writer. By day, he is a Clinical Professor, Division of Rheumatology, Allergy and Clinical Immunology, University of California at Davis School of Medicine

Reminder: If you have a favorite accordion instructor or teacher/student relationship you'd like to tell us about, please contact Val Kieser or Randy Hicks and we will do our best to print your article in a future issue of our newsletter. Thank you to Dr. Anderson for this fascinating profile of Lou Jacklich.

Randy

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# News and Announcements

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To those who generously donate to the Club.

**Each year we start a new cumulative list of donors. If you have donated and your name doesn't show up in this column,** please contact Val at (510) 531-4836 or [vtkacc@ifn.net](mailto:vtkacc@ifn.net) and let her know. Your donations are greatly appreciated and we want to be sure you are recognized. As of publication, we have learned of donations from: Randall Hicks, Bruce Kirschner, Grigoriy Krumik, André Paris, Alexander Roitman, Maryanne Romanowski and her company Care2.com Inc., Amil Samayoa, Michael Sanossian & Ivan Sarkany.

## *Mark your Calendars*

The following Accordion events are coming up:

**Joe Smiell's Button Box Camp** July 12-18 Soda Springs in the High Sierras. Contact Joe Smiell (510) 832-6938 or (707) 751-0525

Galla-Rini Accordion Camp—20th Anniversary July 26-31 Campus of San Domenico Music Conservatory in San Anselmo. Contact Tor Arild (650) 851-7831 or [tarild@gotsky.com](mailto:tarild@gotsky.com)

Memorial Gathering for Clyde Forsman Sunday August 2 from 2-5 pm at the Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market Street, San Francisco. Bring your accordion for a musical tribute to Clyde.

19th Annual Cotati Accordion Festival August 22-23 Cotati, CA with headliner Flaco Jimenez. Those Darn Accordions will also be celebrating their 20th anniversary this year. [www.cotatifest.com](http://www.cotatifest.com) [info@cotatifest.com](mailto:info@cotatifest.com) Note: The GSAC will again be sponsoring a jam tent and providing a table for clubs to display promotional materials.

Accordion Workshop presented by Mario Pedone and Lou Di Maggio Saturday August 29th from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Delta Hawaii Mobile Home Park, 875 Stoneman Ave, Pittsburg, CA 94565. Topics to be covered: theory, harmony, bellows control and shake, and performance preparation. Cost of the workshop is \$25 per person. Participants should bring their lunch. Watch for applications at the next club meeting!

La Vegas International Accordion Convention October 19-22 Gold Coast Hotel and Casino. Phone (800) 472-1695 or email [vegas@AccordionInfo.com](mailto:vegas@AccordionInfo.com)

## *New Members*

This month we did not have any new members, and space did not permit me to include photos from last month, so... Our photographer is still trying to chase down new member Anne Valdez, but we did catch up with the very photogenic Taffy Steffen. Taffy has always been a friend of the club and now we welcome her as a member.



## *Executive Board News*

Elections for the Executive Board will be coming up before you know it. A nominating committee has been formed with Board members Val Kieser and Maryanne Romanowski and **member "at large"— Jim Firpo. The Board needs to have two additional "at large" club members participate on the committee,** so you might receive a call. Nominations for the open positions will be made at our August Monthly meeting (which also happens to be our barbecue this year) and voting will take place at the meeting in September. Start thinking about who you would like to help guide the direction of the club in the following year.

## *San Francisco Accordion Band News*

The SF Accordion Band is performing for our July Musical Meeting and will also be playing at the Piccolo Pavilion in Mill Valley on Sunday August 16. If we can rally enough members, we hope to make an appearance at the memorial gathering for Clyde Forsman on August 2. Clyde was an enthusiastic member of the SF Accordion Band while his health permitted.

## *SFAC Scholarship Program*

Scholarships are awarded each April and October. Applications are available at the monthly meetings or from any board member and must be returned by the end of either March or September to be considered for award the following month.

## News and Announcements (continued)

### *Who is performing around the Bay?*

Steve Balich, North Bay (707) 874-3494

Ron Borelli, Peninsula (650) 574-5707  
[rborelli@aol.com](mailto:rborelli@aol.com)

Renée de la Prade, **Culann's Hounds**,  
San Francisco [www.sfhounds.com](http://www.sfhounds.com)

Richard Denier, Carmel [rdenier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rdenier@sbcglobal.net)

Peter Di Bono, San Francisco  
[peterdsf@gmail.com](mailto:peterdsf@gmail.com)

Reno Di Bono, South Bay  
[ourhike@aol.com](mailto:ourhike@aol.com)

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[www.klezmakers.com](http://www.klezmakers.com)

Joe Domitrowich, South Bay  
[www.capricious-accordion.com](http://www.capricious-accordion.com) or  
[www.alpinerusa.com](http://www.alpinerusa.com)

Don Nurisso, [nurisso@mindspring.com](mailto:nurisso@mindspring.com)

Mike Zampiceni, South Bay [eclecticguy@comcast.net](mailto:eclecticguy@comcast.net)

Zighi Baci, (Sheri Mignano) San Francisco  
[www.zighibaci.com](http://www.zighibaci.com) or  
[zighi@sonic.net](mailto:zighi@sonic.net)



### *Please Remember!*

To leave our meeting hall at the beautiful Oyster Point Yacht Club clean! Please clean up any food or drink spills and toss out paper plates, napkins, cups, etc. before leaving. Thank you!

### *SF Accordion Band Practice*

Wednesday, July 8 and Tuesday, July 14 at 7:00 p.m. at Val Kieser's home in Oakland. Please CALL AHEAD in case there is a change. Everyone is welcome to join. For more information, contact Val (510) 531-4836 or [vtkacc@ifn.net](mailto:vtkacc@ifn.net)

### *Our Neighboring Bay Area Accordion Clubs*

Accordion Club of the Redwoods (ACR) meets monthly on the third Monday, 7:30 p.m. at Hermann & Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue, Petaluma. Contact: Kris Nelson [krisnelson@aol.com](mailto:krisnelson@aol.com) or (707) 795-4860

Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS) **meets monthly on the first Sunday, 1:30 at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue between Keily Blvd and Stevens Creek Blvd, San Jose.** Contact: Bill Toponga (408) 984-5290

Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC). The Vacaville Chapter meets monthly on the second Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. at Creekside Bar & Grill, 555 Main Street, Vacaville. The Humboldt Chapter meets monthly on the third Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. at Humboldt Swiss Club, 5403 Tompkins Hill Road, Loleta. The Sacramento Chapter meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd, Sacramento. Contact for all three Chapters: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359

Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC) meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. at Escalon Community Center, 1055 Escalon Ave, Escalon. Contact: (209) 545-3603

Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS) meets monthly on the first Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. at Lutheran Church Hall, 6365 Douglas, Blvd, off Hwy 80, Granite Bay, CA. Contact: Vince Cukar (916) 791-3041

### *Your Club Wants YOU!!*

**Don't panic— we want you to play for our musical meetings! If you think you aren't ready for the "big time" (stage) just yet, please consider playing a piece or two before the meeting and/or during intermission! Don't be shy—**we are a very forgiving, appreciative and supportive audience! Just contact any of our friendly board members listed on the front of the newsletter.

### *SFAC Membership*

\$30.00 per year for individual or family membership. Meeting admission is \$5.00 for members and \$7.00 for guests. For membership renewal, please send a check to: S.F.A.C., c/o Valerie Kieser, 3437 Crane Way, Oakland, CA 94602. For new members, please include your name and address along with your check, as well as a phone number and email address, if available.

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## **SFAC Newsletter Ad Policy**

Members may place one small ad for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$6.00 per issue. A business-card-size ad costs \$6 per issue or \$60 per year for members; a quarter-page ad costs \$15.00 for members; a half-page ad costs \$25 for members. A full-page ad costs \$50.00 for members. Discount available for ongoing ads. Ads placed by non-members will cost twice the above-quoted prices. A flyer advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members.



NEXT MEETING:



Sunday, July 19, 2009

2:00 p.m. Oyster Point Yacht Club



Entertainment:

The San Francisco Accordion Band

Jana Maas (of the Good Time Accordion Club)

**Algis Ratnikas' Café Barbar Jug Band**

Directions to Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd, South San Francisco:  
From 101 traveling either North or South, take the Oyster Point exit. Turn right onto Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right onto Gull Drive, just before Marina Blvd.). Continue past the gate house to the sign "Oyster Point Yacht Club." There is plenty of parking and ramp access.

And come visit us online at our newly upgraded website: [www.sfaccordionclub.com](http://www.sfaccordionclub.com)

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San Francisco Accordion Club*

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