



The San Francisco Accordion Club

World's First Accordion Club 1912-2009



Newsletter for June 2009



*The
official instrument of San
Francisco!*

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Newsletter

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President's Message

If I were young again and had it to do over, what qualities would I hope for in selecting my accordion teacher? This is a question I have asked myself many times.

First, I would want a person who was patient, and who knows how to explain the elements of music in simple, basic terms. Starting with the study of scales and quickly applying these while learning tunes that would yield immediate, satisfying results. I would expect the level of difficulty to gradually increase while introducing other elements of music, such as harmony and rhythm. I would want my teacher to stress the importance of the use of the bellows. Learning to play notes is one thing, but phrasing and articulation are essential elements that have to be learned from the start.

Technique would be

another important part of learning music. Starting with major and minor scales taught in a way that would be fun yet begin to provide a basis for more challenging work to develop finger dexterity. There are many ways to play scales. I would want my teacher to demonstrate them. A good part of my lesson would stress technique, but I would not want my teacher to place greater importance on playing fast over playing musically.

Playing pieces of music would take into account the element of technique, while at the same time musicianship would always be stressed. I imagine being a singer or a violinist. Would you play your pieces in jerks and unexpected bursts of volume? Feeling and expression should be expected in playing music above all. You need to **learn to play "from the heart" and not just play the notes from a piece of paper. That's what makes a good musician.**

I would learn the very important skill of sight reading. I would be taught the art of improvisation as well. Developing my own style of playing would be encouraged.

Finally, no music student would be motivated to learn an instrument if **they also didn't expect to play for an audience.** Preparing a student to play for others is a great reward in itself and deserves special attention from my teacher. I would be instructed not to select the most difficult piece, but one that I felt comfortable performing in public. Of course, throughout my music studies, the word **"praise" would be the key to success.**

Do you know a teacher who fits these criteria? I invite you to write a short narrative to share with the club, about a favorite accordion teacher and their qualities that inspire(d) YOU!

Frank Montoro

From Argentina to Asia and Points Between

Our Musical Meeting, May 2009

Our meeting opened with an exciting performance by the wonderful group Tangonero. SFAC member Alex Roitman, a student of Peter Di Bono, met up with violinist Michele Walther, cellist Jim Shearer, and guitarist Zac Selissen at a Tango jam at Caffè Trieste on Market Street in San Francisco, and formed Tangonero, which



Tangonero: Alex, Michele, Zac and Jim

you can follow by visiting their website:
www.tangonero.com.

Each player in the group has an impressive personal résumé. Tangonero accordionist Alex Roitman was born and raised in Moscow, where he began piano studies at the age of 7 and picked up the guitar at 13. Michele Walther graduated from the Conservatory of Music in Basel, Switzerland, and the Berklee College of Music in Boston. She has recorded with the Boston String Quartet and toured with Jethro Tull and Ian Anderson. Jim Shearer has played music semi-professionally all his adult life while pursuing an academic career in the sciences. He plays upright bass in jazz and Brazilian ensembles, and is a founding member of the musical group *Sambosseros*.

Zac "Sharbidar" Selissen graduated in Classical and Jazz Guitar from Saint Thomas University in St. Paul, MN, and then graduated in Classical Guitar from the SF Conservatory of Music.

The group gave an authentic and thrilling performance of tangos and *milongues*, including a wonderful variety of special effects with the violin being used in a fascinating percussive way. Their pieces included *El Amanecer*, *El Choclo*, *La Yumba*, *Caserdon de Tejas*, *Milonga de Mis*

Amores, and ended with a rousing rendition of the king of Tangos, *La Cumparsita*.

Next up was Due Zighi Baci (Two Little Gypsy Kisses). Accordionist Sheri Mignano teamed with Tenor Michael Van Why to present a terrific program of the old Neapolitan classics and French Cabaret songs. The

program was titled "A Neapolitan Panini on a Croissant,"

which symbolizes the creative mix of both genres of music. They began with *O Surdato 'Nnamurato*, a WWI story of a young soldier in love, and continued through with Dean Martin's popular

I talian hit

On an Eve-

ning in Roma,

Tango Luna Rossa (Red Moon) and some lovely I talian classics, such as *O Marenariello* and *Anema e Cuore*. The "croissant" section included a theme of songs having to do with "Ladies of the Evening," including *Padam-Padam*, *Pigalle* and *L'Accordéoniste*. The audience was swept away by Michael's lyrical tenor voice, and also played percussion with tambourine and "froggie" for accompaniment. Sheri and Michael passed out songbooks for audience participation, and they ended with another selection of Neapolitan songs with *O Sole Mio* for the grand finale. Sheri's sister Anjali added some spice by dancing in the audience, and rumor has it she was raised playing accordion as well!

Sheri pursues an interest in preserving the old *Ballo Liscio* dance music and Neapolitan Ariettas of yesteryear by creating her own arrangements and transcribing the facsimiles of very old handwritten manuscripts, old tapes and audio recordings. Her efforts have resulted in the authoring of two books: *Mandolins, like Salami* and *Mando-*



The Two Little Gypsy Kisses:
Michael and Sheri

From Argentina to Asia (continued)

lin Melodies, which contains 125+ lead sheets for C instruments. Sheri is a founding member of *I Gondolieri* - a mandolin trio with accordion, mandolin and guitar, and is the accordionist in the mandolin group *Mattinata di Matteo*, who can be seen frequently playing at Caffè Trieste in North Beach. To purchase Sheri's books and find out where she and her groups are playing, visit: www.zighibaci.com.

Michael graduated with a degree in Music from Sonoma State University and has starred in the lead role of **Albin/Zaza in Jerry Herman's La Cage Aux Folles** among other theatrical productions. He is the Executive Director for Project Applause (www.projectapplause) a non-profit organization that features classical vocalists and helps them to launch their careers.

After our break, at which Tuti truly excelled with the food, we had our raffle, won by Ross Marconi. Congratulations, Ross!

Mayumi Miyaoka, one of our scholarship awardees, played for us next, and she has made fantastic progress

with her teacher, Sharon Walters-Greyhosky. Mayumi was born and raised in Japan, then moved to the East Coast where she studied accordion for 5 years with the Acme Studio. She returned to Japan with her hus-

band, and studied there with a Japanese accordion master. Mayumi began her program with a lovely solo transcription of the aria *Lascia Ch'io Pianga* from Handel's opera *Rinaldo*. She was then joined by Sharon, and they played the delightful tune, *Short Visit*, by Stas Venglevski. Mayumi then played the haunting aria *Berceuse de Jocelyn* from Benjamin Godard's opera *Jocelyn*, and continued with Brahms' Hungarian Dance #4. She then played an infrequently heard piece composed by Charles Magnante, *Lost Love*. Their program closed with

another Stas Venglevski duet, *Let's Play Together*.

To conclude this amazing program, we had a new young performer, Dan Cantrell. Dan has been active for the last 12 years creating high quality musical scores and sound design for film and videos for which he has received an Emmy award and a Golden Gate award. His arrangements are rich with acoustic instruments, played by highly skilled musicians.



Dan Cantrell



Proud Teacher and Happy Student: Sharon and Mayumi

As a performer, Dan is focused on musical projects that include performing for Greek Folk Dancers, touring with his ensemble the *Tolids*, managing his band **Dan Cantrell's Megaband**, accompanying puppet shows, and recording with his personal musical hero - Tom Waits. His performances range from Folk music and many expanses of World Music, to Jazz, New Music, Rock and Hip Hop. You can find more about Dan and his many projects at: www.bellowhead.com.

Dan played and sang original music that he has composed. His particular influences are Romany and Jewish music from Eastern Europe, Macedonia and Asia Minor. He started out with a sly piece called *Slinker*, and then went on to a swingy French Musette-style piece with definite Middle Eastern influence called *Musette Rachel*. He continued with a traditional style Hungarian Love Song, and then an original piece with vocals. Dan played with a unique chord structure which blended beautifully with his vocals. He managed to create unusual effects with the bellows, where he almost "bent" the notes in a piece called *I pros*, which was in the style of Northwestern Greece.

A special Thank You! to Lynn Ewing for providing the recap of our May musical meeting!

Lou Jacklich Plays ... and Accordion Fans Listen

Frank Montoro's President's message could not have been more timely. Dr. Scott Anderson, assisted by Sue Hirigoyen has written a biographical tribute to well known and respected instructor and performer Lou Jacklich. Lou has graced our stage with his own performances and those of up and coming accordionists under his tutelage. He is also a member of our club, and is or has been a mentor to many of our members—myself (Randy) included.

Before we present Dr. Anderson's biography of Lou, I would like to further emphasize Frank's invitation for other members to submit a piece reflecting on a past or present accordion instructor and how you were inspired by their teaching and guidance. It would be my pleasure to present your piece in a future issue of our newsletter.

Due to space limitations and not wanting to reduce any of what Dr. Anderson has already concisely written , the biography will be presented in two installments; the first to follow in this issue, and the conclusion in our newsletter for July.

"Lou Jacklich Plays"...And Accordion Fans Listen

By Scott Anderson, MD, PhD

Part 1

A Life with the Accordion. Occasionally Lou Jacklich will pause after a student plays a number, and murmur, "that's a good bit of business." But if a frown creases his brow, the comment might be, "If you play it like that on a gig, you'll lay an egg." From the time he picked up his first accordion at age seven until now, Lou has seen it all. And taught it all, and played it all. For those of us privileged to study the accordion with Lou, lessons include more than just scales and repetition. A lesson from Lou is a personal seminar on the **accordion's history, culture, and capabilities, offered** with historical perspective, artistic aplomb, and practical usefulness. For example, Lou teaches his students

how to start playing at a party if you feel a bit nervous (**sneak in softly**), **how to stroll in a restaurant (don't turn your back to people and watch out for the waiters)**, and how to get people to sing along with Happy Birthday (use the master switch and sing the first bars yourself). Above all, Lou inspires his students by taking their aspirations to heart, whether they want to **play at Carnegie Hall or a friend's house...or both!**

A life lived in music jumps out from the wall of Lou's teaching studio in San Lorenzo. Autographed photographs of famous musicians, ranging from the Lettermen to Billy Strayhorn, compete for space with images of dozens of students performing. And did I mention **the commendation from President Nixon?** And let's not forget a framed copy of *Lou Jacklich Plays*, an album that sounds fresh and modern a half century after its **original recording**. **Lou's interpretations, from Kitten on the Keys to Granada, combine improvisational brilliance with loyalty to the original melodic intent.** Lou, **however, a bear of a man in his early 80s, isn't resting** on his laurels. He still performs regularly at clubs, homes, and parties. Versatility and professionalism are his watchwords. If you hire Lou, expect him to be there early, ready for anything from Italian opera to American blues, and perfectly attired. Recently, I observed Lou in action at a wine-and-cheese fundraiser at De La Salle High School in Concord. A woman approached him, and Lou immediately rendered her requested song, the *Girl from Ipanema*, with sensitivity and flare. But **Lou's effortless demeanor didn't develop overnight. We're talking one part inspiration, two parts perspiration.**



Photo 1: Lou at 7 years old in his yard in Oakland

The Early Years. Born in Hayward, Lou was introduced to the accordion at an early age (Photos 1 and 2), becoming equally comfortable

Lou Jacklich Plays . . .

(continued)

on piano or organ. At age 12 he seriously fractured his right wrist, and for a while celebrated not having to practice while his arm was in a plaster cast. After a while, though, he developed a "funny pain" in his stomach, and came to realize that he missed the instrument.

From then on, Lou's path in life was set. Prior to graduating from Castlemont High School, Lou broke in as a professional musician at Daly City's now defunct *Stumble Down Inn*. Lou explains that "a person could just stumble into it" from a downtown street, so the name was apt. The *Stumble Down* taught Lou how to entertain a tough watering hole crowd. At 16 years of age, Lou probably was breaking the law just by being there. Subsequently, Lou attended San Francisco State College. Lou, like Elvis, interrupted his career to serve his country, enlisting in the United States Navy. His musical prowess soon emerged, however, and young Seaman Jacklich was conscripted to teach the accordion to an admiral. No problem, except the high-ranking gentleman happened to insist on holding his squeeze box upside down!



Stay tuned for Part 2 in next month's newsletter!

About This Month's Entertainers



Photo 2: The Boy Scout Plays, Age 12

The "Lynn, Marian, and Sharon" Trio features three familiar faces, Lynn Ewing, Marian Kelly and Sharon Walters-Greyhosky playing a variety of solos, duets, and yes, even trios. All three ladies are well known to our club and need almost no introduction. Each teaches accordion privately and plays in the San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble. Lynn began studying accordion at the age of 7. It wasn't long and she was directing 5 accordion bands and teaching over 100 youngsters to play accordion. Lynn is certified in the Orff Method of Music Instruction and also plays in the AbsolutAccord ensemble. Marian got bored with the piano, and picked up the accordion at age 12. Under the tutelage of Joe Pizzitola in western Massachusetts, Marian was soon teaching for him in his music school and was a featured performer in the *Joseph F. Pizzitola's 50-piece Plectro-Accordion Symphony Orchestra*. Sharon began playing the accordion at age 6. Sharon is a member of the Accordion Teachers Guild, and is very active in the music community playing in the AbsolutAccord ensemble, with Goat Hall Productions and accompanying poetry presenters at the Freight & Salvage Coffee House in Berkeley.

Salane and Friends is a "solo band" featuring Salane Schulz. Salane is no stranger to the Bay Area accordion community; she has recently performed for our club with fellow students of Lou Jacklich, and you may recognize Salane as Ms. February 2010 in the *Accordion Babes* Calendar. Salane performs at a variety of venues around the Bay Area and you can keep up with her by going to her website: www.missalaneous.com.

The Wild Rovers are an Irish Pub Band from Santa Cruz formed in 2004 when the 6 founding members discovered that they all shared a passion for Irish music. After a few practice sessions the guys performed at the Poet and Patriot Irish Pub in Santa Cruz, and the Wild Rovers were born. The Wild Rovers are still performing and evolving musically and have expanded to include our own Val Kieser's nephew Jeff Trabucco on Bodhran, Vocals and Whistle. Visit: www.myspace.com/wildrovers7 where you can learn more about the band and hear some of their great music!

News and Announcements

Our Sincere Thanks!

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 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: Maryanne Romanowski and her company Care2.com Inc., Amil Samayoa, Randall Hicks, Alexander Roitman, Bruce Kirschner, Michael Sanossian, André Paris, Ivan Sarkany & Grigoriye Kumik.

Mark your Calendars

The following Accordion events are coming up:

Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration
June 18-21 Leavenworth, WA email
info@leavenworth.org

Celebrate the Accordion June 20-21 Petaluma Contact Tom Cordoni (707) 762-2231 or cordacc@aol.com

Kimberley International Old Time Accordion Championships (KI OTAC) July 6-11 Kimberley, B.C. Call 800-4KI OTAC email info@KI OTAC.ca or visit www.KI OTAC.com

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

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 info@cotatifest.com

La Vegas International Accordion Convention October 19-22 Gold Coast Hotel and Casino. Phone (800) 472-1695 or email vegas@Accordionl nfo.com

Welcome New Members!

Last month we welcomed Taffy Steffen and Anne Valdez as new members. Taffy is a frequent visitor to our musical meetings, in the audience and on stage—most recently with the Accordion Magic Five. Anne was encouraged to come by Sharon Walters-Greyhosky. She enjoyed the program so much, she has also decided to become a member. Welcome, Taffy and Anne, and thank you Sharon for being such a great recruiter.

Can you help??

The Executive Board is urgently looking for someone to assist with setting up the audio equipment before the monthly musical meetings. When our expert, Vinny Rinaldi can be here, you will assist him, and when he is unable, it will be your **turn in the spotlight. I am told you don't have to have a degree in electrical engineering**—the connections have all been color coded and we will be glad to train you. If you can help and would like more information, please contact president Frank Montoro at (650) 574-4757.

San Francisco Accordion Band News (aka The Fun Band)

The Fun Band has a busy performance schedule this month. They will be performing at the SVAS monthly meeting on June 7, the Golden State Accordion Club picnic on June 14 (see details below) and at the Celebrate the Accordion Festival in Petaluma on June 20. Come on out for a fun time!

The Golden State Accordion Club is having their annual picnic on Sunday, June 14, 11:00-**4:00 at Pippo's Ranch** in Vacaville. Gary Blair Sr. and Jr. both will be the stars. They are planning lots of individual performances, bands, jam sessions, singing, dancing, bocce ball, horseshoes, etc. AND plenty of food. Contact Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359. Val has reservation forms. Cost: \$12 for members; \$15 for non-members; \$6 children under 10 (or \$15 at the door).

SFAC Scholarship Program

Scholarships are awarded each April and October. Applications are available at the monthly meetings or from any board member, to 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

Renée de la Prade, **Culann's Hounds**, San Francisco www.sfhounds.com

Richard Denier, Carmel rdenier@sbcglobal.net

Peter Di Bono, San Francisco peterdsf@gmail.com

Reno Di Bono, South Bay
ourhike@aol.com

William De Michelis, South Bay
wdd777@comcast.net

Bruce Kirschner and The Klezmakers,
kirschner@aol.com

www.klezmakers.com

Joe Domitrowich, South Bay

www.capricious-accordion.com or
www.alpinerusa.com

Don Nurisso, nurisso@mindspring.com

Mike Zampiceni, South Bay eclecticguy@comcast.net

Due Zighi Baci, (Sheri Mignano) San Francisco www.zighibaci.com or 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 , June 3 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

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 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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Skyler Fell (415) 596-5952
Sharon Walters-Greyhosky (415) 621-8284
Lou Jacklich (510) 317-9510
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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.

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NEXT MEETING:

Sunday, June 21, 2009

2:00 p.m. Oyster Point Yacht Club



Entertainment:

The "Lynn, Marian and Sharon" Trio

Salane Schultz and Friends

The Wild Rovers

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

Newsletter of the San Francisco Accordion Club

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