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Delaware Accordion Club Newsletter
WHAT'S SHAKIN'

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President: Joe Oberly

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www.delawareaccordionclub.com



EDITOR'S SOLO

- I must begin this newsletter on a sad note. Patrick Matic, the owner of the coffee house where our open mic sessions were held until 2004, lost his son, Claude, in a traffic accident on October 6, 2006. Claude, sixteen years old, was a passenger in a car that was rear-ended and pushed into an oncoming vehicle. This young man's life touched many others: a "standing room only" service was held at St. Matthew's in Newport on October 10, 2006 and he was buried at All Saints Cemetery. A large contingent of classmates from the Delaware Military Academy attended.
- Our first open mic session at the First State Diner in Newark was a great success (see notes below for the August 20, 2006 session). If you haven't been to an open mic session yet please try to stop in sometime.
- Gordon Saltar, who likes to play cajun music, visited a local instrument repair shop and had a very good experience there. David Cottrell, who plays button accordion, repairs and restores all types of instruments, from strings to brass. His business is called "Well-Tempered Music" and is located just a few miles from Delaware at 293 Lewisville Road, Elkton, Maryland 21921 (this is

the Fair Hill area west of Newark, Delaware). Call 410-392-2279 or by computer he's at wtm@zoominternet.net.

- Dave Kupsis has expressed a desire to have a little more jamming going on at the open mic sessions. I think now with our new, bigger location this will be easier. We'll try to allot enough time for each performer to play solo (each solo will depend on how many show up) and then allow time at the end for a bit of a jam session.
- Here are some instrument websites I've come across lately:
 - www.accordions.com/excelsior
 - www.paolosoprani.com
 - www.scandalli.com
 - www.semaccordion.com
- I'm enclosing a list of everyone on our mailing list. I've tried to note those who play jobs (or did in the past) by specifying "accordionist" or listing a band name, but I may have missed someone. If you would like anything about your entry updated, please let me know.
- Those of you not listed as "honorary" members on the mailing list will also find a treasurer's report enclosed. Please read this document regarding dues to be paid in order to remain on the list for paper copies of the newsletter and other communications.
- Did you ever wonder.....is it true that cannibals don't eat clowns because they taste funny?



PAST EVENTS

If anyone attends an accordion event and



would like to report it, please let the editor know.

make easy pieces more elaborate and appealing to an audience.

September 16, 2006 Wilmington Accordion Festival

Beginning the day was Alex Meixner from the Allentown, Pennsylvania area. He explained some of the unique characteristics of button diatonic accordions. He then switched back and forth between button and piano accordions to demonstrate differences in polka performance techniques that would be encountered in various ethnic settings. As an example, he played the same tune as it might be played in different geographical regions within the U.S.

DAC member Richard DiBlassio of Avondale, Pennsylvania then offered a workshop on what it takes to become a good musician. He first presented a series of finger dexterity exercises (with handouts) which, when mastered, will allow the musician to perform difficult pieces. There is a "no pain, no gain" philosophy behind Richard's exercises; you may hurt when doing them but that's the way it should be. Another good point he made was that if a musician is having a hard time playing a tune, it is likely that the fingering is not correct. A good exercise book can be used as a reference because it will have a solution to the problem. Richard finished by demonstrating how to break the "rule rut" when doing a public performance. Among other things, transitioning into different keys is a good way to hold the audience's attention.

Shirley Johnson of Austin, Texas presented the next work shop on Balkan accordion music. She grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania immersed in her Croatian heritage. By playing and singing, Shirley demonstrated some of the differences in the music of Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania.

Stanley Darrow, founder of the Acme Accordion School in Westmont, New Jersey and Joanna Arnold-Darrow gave a presentation on how to

Phyllis Edamatsu of Dover, Delaware is a member of the DAC and a student of Stanley Darrow. She held a workshop on "Ragtime Favorites". Ragtime had a rebirth in 1974 due to the film score for the very popular movie, "The Sting". Phyllis explored ragtime pieces through handouts, recordings and live performance.

The final workshop of the day featured Henry Doktorski of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Henry spoke of "The Deiro Brothers: Guido and Pietro". He has written the first and foremost biography of the two men who almost single handedly introduced the piano accordion to North America in the early 1900's. Henry played a few of their tunes but this time was primarily to review the lives of the brothers. Much more of the music was performed at the concert later in the day.

A catered buffet dinner was held from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. Almost fifty people attended and were offered a great variety of food. Some dinner time music was provided by Shirley Johnson and Richard DiBlassio. For dessert, besides apple pie and coffee, there was a concert.

Stanley and Joanna Arnold-Darrow began the evening. When not running their accordion school they have a full schedule involving the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra, producing the annual AAMS Festival near Valley Forge, and attending festivals in the U.S. and Europe. They perform both duet and solo pieces. Most people think of the accordion as a loud instrument, but when necessary it can be played softly: Stanley's ability to control the bellows and play softly is wonderful. One piece Joanna played involved a complicated right hand passage and when it was repeated she swapped the treble/bass roles and did all the arpeggios with the bass while the right hand accompanied. *Editor's note: I get a headache just thinking about this!*



Henry Doktorski completed the concert. He is one of the leading accordionists in the United States and a recognized figure in international and classical accordion circles. Tonight he played numerous pieces by Guido and Pietro Deiro to complement his earlier workshop on the two brothers. These ranged from classical to polkas. He noted that although Pietro became famous in the accordion world as a musician and prolific composer, contemporaries regarded Guido as the better accordionist.

For additional information, the following addresses were distributed during the festival:

East European Folklife Center
www.EEFC.org

Balkan music
www.CDBaby.com
www.arcmusic.co.uk

Shirley Johnson
P.O. Box 203244
Austin, TX 78720-3244
www.Vjeverica.com
Shirley@Vjeverica.com
512-680-0422

Henry Doktorski
www.henrydoktorski.com

Editor's note: the following day the Wilmington News-Journal reported that the festival was sponsored by the DAC. This wasn't correct. Lisa Cristofich has to be given a huge amount of credit for producing (at great financial risk) what I think was Wilmington's first accordion festival. The DAC played a minor role by notifying its members of the event. A "thank you" should also go out to Lisa's parents, Tony and Ann, for assisting during the festival and also, John and Thelma Maiorano for having Shirley Johnson and Henry Doktorski as their house guests.

Various Dates June through September, 2006

Richard DiBlassio had a busy summer, playing 26

performances. Among the highlights was his performance at Brandywine Village in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. They have very professional stage, sound and lighting systems. There were 350 people in the audience and it was also broadcast over closed-circuit television to the rest of the complex.

He would like to thank Elio Battista for recommending him to play at a private Italian affair in Wilmington.

September 17, 2006

Richard DiBlassio performed during the 11:00 AM Mass at St. Anthony's in Wilmington, Delaware. People seemed a little skeptical at first about having an accordion in the church, but when the cantor and Richard began singing and playing they became more receptive. Among other pieces, Richard played Schubert's "Ave Maria" and Malotte's "The Lord's Prayer".

Past DAC Open Mic Sessions

August 20, 2006

This was the first open mic session held at the First State Diner in Newark, Delaware. And as Tony the Tiger used to say it was GRRREAT! The restaurant features two extensive menus: one is American fare and the other is mediterranean specialties. The open mic was held in a very large room, something the DAC has not had in the past. At one point, numerous couples were dancing and there was room for more.

Gary Robinson kicked off the day with the Bing Bang Polka. He said that would be about all he could play because he had been in a knife fight with a doctor just four days ago and the doctor won: Gary's gall bladder was removed!

Joe Oberly and Joe Alexander each played a few tunes to help break in the new venue. Dave Kupsis played a light weight, reedless electronic SEM accordion which had a wonderful sound to it. Bob Shoemaker played a



few tunes on this instrument as well, including a samba with a very complicated treble /bass relationship. However, Bob made it sound easy.

Jerry Jacoby, a first time visitor from Lebanon, Pennsylvania played a beautiful Monarch accordion. While in the Air Force, Jerry was stationed in Norway. So, among other pieces, he played a Norwegian tune. All of the tunes sounded great with the tuba bass tuning of the Monarch.

Susan Shertok played a mix of Jewish tunes and standards. She also did her signature cover of "Those Were the Days" as sung by Edith Bunker. *Editor's note: this last number is not recommended listening for those with pacemakers or hearing aids.*

Jeff Anderson, playing a brilliant green 48 base accordion, followed with some celtic tunes and a couple of vocals, including an old folk song from the sixties, "Summer Wages". Jeff mentioned being from Minnesota and when asked if he could speak Minnesotan, Jeff's wife, Charlene, gave a brief demonstration and said "eyah...sure...you bet".

Richard DiBlassio also performed today and at one point had everyone singing "That's Amore".

September 17, 2006

Darlene Laird began the day with several tunes, including a version of "The Petite Waltz". This version has a bass line in the middle section which, when coupled with a musette treble, reminded the listeners of a French cafe setting.

Next, the duo of Carol and Len Wolek played accordion and banjo, respectively. They had been in Wilmington the day before to attend the accordion festival and made a complete accordion weekend out of it by coming to the open mic today before heading home a couple of hours away. They sounded great as they played and sang numerous "old timey" tunes. One of those was "The Orange Blossom Special" which included

Len doubling up on the banjo and a train whistle, as well as a volunteer (Gary Robinson) playing a washboard. Clickety clack..clickety clack.....

Then the open mic session was in for a total surprise. It was discovered some weeks ago by John Maiorano that Charles Mariani, who has been attending the open mics for years (but not playing because he doesn't "play anymore"), really can play. The discovery was made shortly after Charles ingested a little bourbon while visiting John's home. So, since the secret was out, Charles was persuaded to do a few tunes today, including a duet with his wife Jeanne.

John Maiorano was up next and played his beautiful Excelsior midi (without bourbonette tuning!), followed by Susan Shertok who did a high energy version of "Tzena, Tzena". Then Joe Alexander, who has a great gift at improvisation, used a fake book of standards and turned them into full blown excellent renditions.

Phyllis Edamatsu and Richard DiBlassio, who each held workshops at the Wilmington Accordion Festival the day before, finished the day.

There was a young observer at today's session: Pelin, the daughter of the restaurants's owner, recently began taking violin lessons and was interested in the music. *Editor's note: hopefully she will play a tune for us one day.*

October 15, 2006

Darlene Laird got things rolling today by playing a few tunes on a PanJet accordion borrowed from her neighbor. Matt Hedson was next. He did a few solo tunes that sounded great on a recently acquired double tone chamber accordion. He was then joined by fellow Philadelphian Frank Carberry, who first played a banjo and then a small button accordion to accompany Matt.

Susan Shertok played next, followed by John Maiorano. Charles Mariani, continuing his accordion "come back", then sang and played a few tunes. His stint with a country swing band



many years ago is evident - he's very entertaining.

Gary Robinson borrowed John Maiorano's Excelsior midi to experiment with the bass sound. He performed "Hey Good Lookin'" to warm up and then used the deep, rolling bass, to perform Elvis Presley's classic, "All Shook Up". Gary promised to never do this again until he knows all the words or he gets better at making them up! But that Excelsior bass sounded great.....

Bob Shoemaker, Phyllis Edamatsu and Richard DiBlassio finished the day with solo performances of numerous competition quality pieces.

Joe Ragan accompanied many of the performers with his guitar, but didn't play his accordion.

Special thanks go to Jack Chrustowski and Richard DiBlassio. Jack donated his share of the 50/50 drawing to the club (the other half went to the restaurant, as usual). And Richard gave the club a wrist watch with an accordion on the face. This was raffled off and the money raised also went into the club treasury.

Editor's note: I have been to Shady Maple many times. The restaurant is a huge, modern building. They do breakfast, lunch and dinner smorgasbords every day except Sunday with a food layout that's about 200 feet long! The lower floor has the largest gift shop I've ever been in. There is also a large, affiliated super market there, as well as a Good's Department Store. You can easily spend a day in East Earl, about 40 miles north of Newark, Delaware.

ACME Accordion School

November 5, 2006

Activities all day. See Stanley Darrow, Joanna Arnold-Darrow, Lenny Feldmann, others. For info, contact:

ACME Accordion School
322 Haddon Avenue
Westmont, New Jersey 18108
856-854-6628

Accordion Repair Seminar with Dale Wise

November 11-12, 2006
Sat: 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Sun: 1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

The seminar will be located at the Wise's at 4314 Burr Hill Road (Rte. 692) Burr Hill, Virginia 22433

Directions:

From the North:
95 S, 3 W, 20 S, right on 611, left on 692, first driveway on right

OR

495 S, 66 W, 29 S at Gainesville, 3 E Exit, 522 S, left on 611, right on 692, first driveway on right

From the South:

95 N, 3 W, 20 S, right on 611, left on 692, first driveway on right

OR

29 N, 3 E Exit, 522 S, left on 611, right on 692, first driveway on right

FUTURE EVENTS



If anyone knows of an accordion event coming up, please let the editor know.

John Collins at Shady Maple Smorgasbord

John contacted Joe Alexander to say he plays every Friday and Saturday night, from 5 - 8 pm.

Shady Maple Smorgasbord
129 Toddy Drive

East Earl, PA 17519 717-354-8222 800-238-7363 www.shady-maple.com



Motel:

Holiday Inn Select (Rtes. 95 & 3)
2801 Plank Road (Rte.3 W)
Central Park (lots of stores & restaurants)
800-682-1049

Airports:

Dulles International
Richmond International

Feel free to bring a guest to lunch on Saturday.
Guests who are not participating in the seminar
are welcome to relax at the Wise's, go shopping or
sightseeing.

RSVP

Contact Dale at:
Dale E. Wise, M.M.E.
P.O. Box 53
Burr Hill, Virginia 22433
540-854-5209
Email: Accordionplus@aol.com

Editor's note: above info was provided by Dale to
Lisa Cristofich who forwarded it to me. Dale was
featured at one of Lisa's Accordicats concerts a
couple of years ago and is active with the
Maryland Accordion Club. His home is about a
four hour drive from Newark, Delaware.

Florida Accordion Smash

November 11, 2006

Lenny Feldmann will be in Orlando, Florida. For
details: www.accordions.com/Florida/

Richard DiBlassio Returns to WVUD

November 12, 2006 7:00 PM

Richard will be playing live on Brian Lee's
Sunday night "Scratchy Grooves" radio
program from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. The station can be
heard at FM 91.3 or www.wvud.org.

Future DAC Open Mic Sessions

Open to the public:

First State Diner & Restaurant

at I-95 Exit 1, Route 896 North
Newark, Delaware 19713

302-733-0442 302-733-0429 (fax)
www.firststatediner.com

11-19-2006 Sunday 2:00 - 5:00 pm 12-17-
2006 Sunday 2:00 - 5:00 pm 01-21-2007
Sunday 2:00 - 5:00 pm 02-18-2007 Sunday
2:00 - 5:00 pm 03-18-2007 Sunday 2:00 -
5:00 pm 04-15-2007 Sunday 2:00 - 5:00 pm

FOR SALE OR WANTED



Looking for a particular piece of music or
instrument repair? Found an old instrument
you want to sell or give away? Tell the editor
and it will go in the next newsletter.

Wanted: Contacts with other accordionists. Joe
Alexander received an e-mail, as follows: "My
name is Mel Madeksho and I live in Memphis,
TN. I've played the accordion for many years and
I'd like to contact other players to exchange ideas,
music, tips, etc." Contact Mel at
mmadeksh@bellsouth.net if you would like to
correspond with Mel.

Wanted: piano accordion with 48 bass buttons (or
something less than 120). Contact Bill
Zimmerman at WZimmerman@Christianacare.org.

For Sale: new book by Carmen Vitanza titled "My
Accordion, the Music of My Life"; send \$23.95
(\$26.95 in Canada) to Carmen Vitanza, 3842
Berkley Ave., Drexel Hill, PA 19026; price
includes postage (allow 4-6 weeeeks for delivery);
610-626-3644 Carmaccord@aol.com



ACCORDION REPAIRS

New/used instruments/equipment may be
available, as well.

ACCORDION CONNECTION LLC

Arthur



WHAT'S SHAKIN'



and Sue Welch 136 Route
 106, Unit 1 Gilmanton, New
 Hampshire 03237 603-267-8600 800-328-5227
 FAX 603-267-8667 www.accordionconnection.com

ACME ACCORDION SCHOOL
 Stanley Darrow 322
 Haddon Avenue Westmont,
 New Jersey 18108 856-854-6628

CINTIOLI'S MUSIC CENTER
 5359 Oxford Avenue Philadelphia,
 Pennsylvania 19124 215-533-2050 215-533-
 2053 www.cintiolimusic.com

KUKLEWICZ, BILL Wilkes-
 Barre, Pennsylvania 18706-3006 570-
 823-4957

SORCSEK, MARTIN R. Lebanon,
 Pennsylvania 17042-9032 717-273-5944

TAFELSKI, ED New
 Castle, Delaware 19720 302-655-3529

WELL-TEMPERED MUSIC David
 Cottrell 293
 Lewisville Road Elkton,
 Maryland 21921 410-392-2279

NEW MEMBERS, ASSOCIATES



The club welcomes the following members and supporters:

Ralph DelVecchio Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
 Jerry and Mary Jacoby Lebanon, Pennsylvania
 Marcia Tarburton Bear, Delaware

SHOW OVER - LATCH THE BELLOWS

