



MASSACHUSETTS ACCORDION ASSOCIATION

Volume 8, Issue 4
June 2014

The MAAA is a group of accordion enthusiasts that welcomes players of all skill levels and accordion types, as well as interested non-players.

Join us! Open to the public.

1:30-4 pm

Ciociaro Social Club
144 Bridge Street
Newton, Massachusetts

Next meeting: June 22
Detailed meeting info is available on our website.

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www.MAAccordion.org



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May 4 workshop: How to back up another instrument with the accordion

MAAA's May 4 meeting featured a great presentation by [Jan and Lou Borelli](#), who discussed and demonstrated how accordionists can back up another instrument.

Their presentation was based on decades of experience--they have been performing together since 1980. Their repertoire includes a vast library of ethnic tunes, show tunes, jazz standards, and sing-a-longs. They perform at a variety of events, from small parties to weddings.



Jan Borelli

Jan plays accordion and keyboard. Lou plays trumpet, flugel horn, trombone, clarinet, sax, flute--and he also sings. Here are some of the tips they shared during their presentation, and then showed us in action:

- Leave your ego at the door. Your job is to make the soloist you are accompanying look (and sound) good.
- Ask the soloist to provide the count so you know when to start a song and what tempo it will be, then play four bars to get things going (for example, you can play the last four bars of the song as an intro or a chord pattern based on the key signature of the piece).
- Discuss cues before you perform, then watch and listen for them. Keep smiling even if you miss a cue.
- To back up a soloist, you can play sustained chords or notes, arpeggios, scales, or harmony lines. You can also play background rhythms.

Jan and Lou lead or participate in numerous musical projects, including Louie Lewis and the Klezmerbops, the Lou Borelli Big Band,

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May 25 meeting: New open mic format



MAAA's May 25th meeting featured an expanded open mic. Open mic performers experimented with a new format--instead of setting up one by one to perform, they sat in a semi-circle together, facing the audience, and took turns as they went around the circle.

It was an interesting concept and the audience responded enthusiastically.

The MAAA's new accordion band had its second rehearsal at the May 25th meeting after the open mic. To learn more about the accordion band, contact Carmen D'Angelo at dangeloc@comcast.net

Thanks to Jim and Carol Avedisian, the video of the May 25th meeting, with snippets from a dozen open mic performances, has been posted on Youtube. If you missed it, here is your chance to see what transpired. As usual, it is unlisted but the link has been emailed to members. It makes for some lovely listening!



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May 4 workshop: How to back up another instrument

Tervetuloa Vati (Finnish music), Black Sheep Dixieland Jazz Band, and the Schwarze Schafe German Band. Jan performs on the accordion for children's parties and at senior citizen events. Their Hi-Lites School of Music in Paxton offers private instruction on most instruments; music theory, jazz, improvisation, and voice lessons. Learn more at www.borellimusic.com. (Their site also has a video of Jan playing Bach's Toccata in D Minor at the MAAA meeting on May 4--wow!)

The meeting was a fantastic example of MAAA members sharing their experience and expertise with each other. Many thanks to Jan and Lou for their presentation and performance.

June 22 meeting

The next meeting of the MAAA will feature a playalong and a performance by Don and Leslie McMahon. Hope to see you (and hear you) on June 22.

Petosa: In Seattle, an accordionist's pilgrimage

by Catherine Coleman

Carlo Petosa made his first accordion in 1922. Nearly a century later, third- and fourth-generation Petosas, both named Joe, sell and repair accordions in a showroom-museum-workshop where they've been located since 1955. Prior to that, Carlo made accordions in his basement.

I visited Petosa Accordions on a recent trip to Seattle. I was welcomed warmly by the extended Petosa family. Petosa Accordions is the only company in the US that manufactures its own product. Their instruments are no longer created in Seattle because, as they explained, it became impossible to find expert craftsmen in the US. Seven workers in their small factory in Castelfidardo, Italy, make Petosa accordions today, each of which takes more than a year to complete. Each artisan specializes in a single aspect of the manufacturing process--for example, there's a keyboard maker, a boxmaker, a bass maker, and a "reed man" (who is actually female) who makes their reed leathers. When the instruments arrive in Seattle from the factory, they are taken apart, checked, tuned, then reassembled.

Although the Petosa brand is deeply rooted in tradition, it continues to respond to the changing needs of accordionists. "We don't have the attitude that the accordion should remain the instrument of the 1940s and 1950s," Joe Sr. explained. "An entire generation of accordionists who who grew up in or at the tail end of the accordion's 'golden age' are finding

themselves wishing they had lighter instruments that are more comfortable to play or easier to travel with. Another trend is musicians who want to add the accordion to the multiple instruments that they already play.

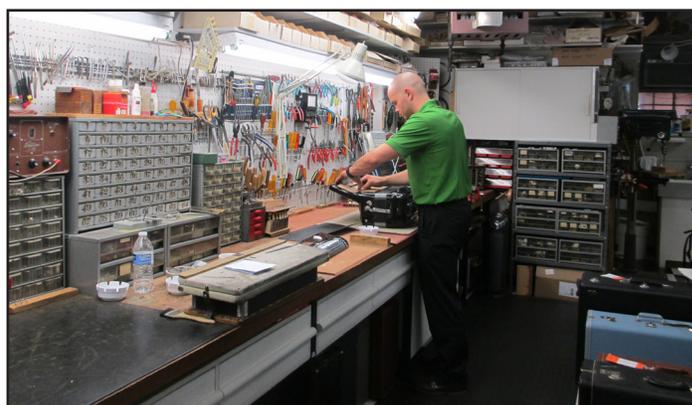
Until now, moving to a smaller accordion was "like switching to a spinet piano after playing a baby grand," he said. "Instead of finding a few reductions to make a lighter accordion, we've made infinitesimal adjustments to more than 100 things, so our new line of Leggera accordions offers reduced weight without affecting quality or tone."



The Petosas have collected more than 100 antique accordions, about 50 of which are displayed on the walls of their accordion museum.



Petosa's Leggera (Italian for "light") models include a full size accordion and a more compact 96-bass instrument.



Accordionists from around the world send their accordions to the Petosas for maintenance and repair. "The accordion is kind of like a vacuum cleaner, it sucks everything in," they noted.

CALENDAR

June 1, 8 pm

**Ezekiel's Wheels Klezmer Band
Club Passim, Cambridge**

www.passim.org

Ezekiel's Wheels Klezmer Band and Scottish band Alba's Edge join forces for an evening of klezmer, scottish, jazz, latin, chamber music, and funk.

June 3, 7:30 pm

**Banda Magda
Regattabar, Charles Hotel,
Cambridge**

www.regattabarjazz.com

Greek-born singer, accordionist, and composer Magda Giannikou and her Banda Magda perform global music including baião, jazz manouche, Greek dance, and samba.

June 8, 4 pm

**Secret Life
Lexington Depot, Lexington**

World premier of lyrics and music composed by Makis Emmanouilidis based on the works of Greek writer Angelos Terzakis (1907-1979). Instrumentation includes violin, accordion, guitar, and bouzouki.

June 9, 3 pm

**Lou and Jan Borelli
Boston Farmers Market, 446 West
Broadway, South Boston**

www.borellimusic.com

MAAA's Jan and Lou Borelli perform songs for children, international selections, and American patriotic music.



June 14, 12-6 pm

Somerville Squeezebox Slam

www.somervilleartscouncil.org/squeezebox

Sponsored by the Somerville Arts Council, the Squeezebox Slam invites accordionists to stroll and play around Somerville from 12-3 pm. At 3 pm, head to Davis Square for a group playalong, then enjoy performances by renowned New England accordionists--Tom and Barbara Pixton, Paul Monte with Tal Shalom-Kobi, Alec Redfearn and the Eyesores, Christina Crowder with Charles Casimiro, and Dallas Vietty's Musette Project (pictured above).

June 14, 6 pm

**Dinner Dance
Sovitajaa Finn Park, Rutland
Call for tickets: 508-842-8468.**

After dinner, MAAA's Jan and Lou Borelli will perform while people move to Sovitajaa's outstanding dance floor for Finnish folk dancing and American ballroom dancing.

Follow MAAA on Facebook for late-breaking updates about musical happenings in the area.
www.facebook.com/MAAccordion



June 19, 7:30 pm

**Dustbowl Revival
Regattabar, Charles Hotel,
Cambridge**

www.regattabarjazz.com

Old school bluegrass, gospel, jug-band, and swamp blues merge with the hot swing of the 1930s, performed by a travelling collective of musicians dedicated to diverse styles of traditional American music. Its eclectic instrumentation includes accordion, mandolin, fiddle, tuba and other brass, pedal steel, a bass made from a canoe oar, and kazoo.

June 25, 7 pm

**Schwarze Schafe German Band
Bandstand, Princeton, MA**

www.borellimusic.com

Bring a blanket or lawn chairs for this outdoor concert featuring Jan and Lou Borelli.

June 28, 11 a.m.

**Bird Mancini
Farmers Market, Main Street,
Roslindale Village**

www.birdmancini.com

Boston's accordion/guitar duo performs eclectic acoustic pop with lush vocal arrangements, harmonica, percussion, bells and whistles.