

THE ACCORDION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

*Wish all members, friends and family a very
happy Christmas and a New Year filled with
music.*

ACCORDION REVIEW



DECEMBER 2011

Volume 28, Issue 4

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President Emeritus Passes Away



To all members and friends of the ASA,

President Emeritus of the Accordion Society of Australia Mrs Else Brandman passed away peacefully on the 1st December at 12.15pm after a long illness, she was 85.

At this time our thoughts and best wishes are with her family.

In tribute to Mrs Brandman this issue will have her biography and reminiscences.

Let us continue the work she started in Australia and continue with her love for the accordion.

Dr. Elizabeth Jones
President ASA

Condolences received from Austria

We are all so sorry to hear this. Yesterday at you rehearsal the "old" ones of the orchestra were really sad.
We all knew Mrs. Brandman as energetic and vivid woman, who did a lot for the accordion world.
To her family we wish all the best and our deep empathy to everybody.

All the best from your Austrian friends,

Salzburger Akkordeonverein Saalfelden
President Doris Frank

Condolences received from New Zealand

Thank you for passing on this sad news.
I will always remember the work that Mrs Brandman put into the establishment of the ASA Examinations, later to become part of AMEB. This was an extraordinary effort from a special lady.

Heather Masefield
Secretary Accordion Examination Board of New Zealand

PRESIDENTS REPORT

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members, subscribers and friends in the accordion world a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope that 2012 is filled with accordion music and that we all have a chance to catch up again at our International Festival.

Since the last issue of the review we have had a mixture of sad news and exciting news. On December 1st 2011 our Federal President Emeritus Mrs Else Brandman passed away peacefully after a long illness, surrounded by her family. A celebration of her life was held on Tuesday 6th December at Cronulla RSL. The following is from the speech I made on behalf of all accordionists.

Mrs Brandman was an inspirational lady who had an enormous impact on my life, my family's life and also the life of accordionists particularly here in Australia. My mother still likes to talk about the start of my music career as being the day my cousin Donna came home from her accordion lesson at Brandman Music studios excitedly saying "Nin - Elizabeth can start music lessons" Mrs B had just started the kindermusik classes in Rockdale. My lessons on accordion started at the age of 5 and with her encouragement my interest in music grew to cover piano, violin and flute. Keeping it all in the family I studied accordion and piano with Margaret at different times during my education

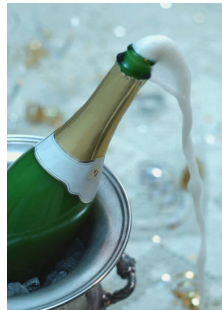
This was the start of a long time friendship and education. From initial lessons in Rockdale to lessons in Maroubra, then teaching and moving into a career in music. My path was similar to all accordionists and musicians that Mrs B inspired.

Last night (Monday 5th December) the Accordion Society of Australia held their Xmas party. A minutes silence was held for Mrs B as without her vision and determination the members who gathered together would not have met. It was in February 1970 that Mrs B acting as convenor opened the inaugural meeting of the ASA at Rockdale Town Hall. President of the Accordion Society was a position Mrs B held from 1970 to 1983 then again from 1986 - 1995. Again with her determination and love for the accordion Mrs B encouraged many children and teenagers

love for music and new friendships. This was particularly evident at the yearly festivals that traveled state to state. Through her international contacts members of the Accordion Society formed friendships with overseas accordionists and many of us had a chance to travel overseas and study. Although the accordion had its peak days the Accordion Society is continuing to foster the education and friendships started by Mrs B.

Accordionists from around the world have been sending their condolences to Mrs Brandman's family and also including examples of her tireless work in promoting the accordion.

She will be missed by all – she was a lady who could make you feel as if you were the only person of importance as she communicated to you. Her subtle humor (with Germanic slant) will be remembered by all, as will her fondness for champagne.



It was on the way to Cronulla RSL that I shared a phone call with Silvia Kocic – congratulations to Dino Kocic on being awarded Young Bosnian/ Australian of the year. It is a great honor.

Please remember to contact either the President, Accordion Review editor or the Publicity Officer with any information, snippets or gossip, upcoming performances that you might like covered in the review. We look forward to hearing from all our members

Happy Reading and Happy Practicing
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
Dr. Elizabeth Jones DCA (UWS) BMus (Syd.Uni)

Mrs. Brandman President Emeritus ASA.

On Thursday 1st. December 2011 Mrs. Brandman passed away peacefully, after a long illness. She was eighty five years old. A wake was held on Tuesday 6th. December at the Cronulla RSL Club which is close to the place where Mrs. Brandman used to have her daily swim. This wake was to be a celebration of her long and fulfilling life. Anyone who knew Mrs. B. could not possibly forget her, she was a dynamic personality and my family had known her for thirty seven years. She had a great impact on our lives especially our daughter Elizabeth. She will be missed but it was an honour and privilege to have known her. May she rest in peace.

The story which follows was written for an earlier edition of the Accordion Review and is appropriate for it to be re-told. JJ

ME AND MY ACCORDION

By E. M. Brandman.

First published in the Accordion Review May 1987.



At the time of writing this little epistle, I am 60 years old, and when I look back into my past and forward into the remaining future, the accordion seems to be playing a big part in my life.

I was born in Berlin, Germany. At the time Berlin was considered a Cosmopolitan City, fashion, the arts, politics, international expositions were part and package of life in Berlin. I am therefore a true cosmopolitan. I love people, I like activity, I love expositions, exhibitions, controversies, new ideas.

My parents were both musicians, my Mum was 2nd. violinist in one of the first lady orchestras touring Europe. My father played the Handharmonika, the diatonic kind in the key of D major, with a D major chord when pulling the bellows and a seventh chord when pushing the bellows. He came from a farming family, his uncle was a Kapellmeister in the village and spontaneous musical "parties" were not uncommon in our family. My brother played the violin, he is 13 years older than I, and often acted as if he was my "Big" brother, who knew most of the music very well. I remember getting a small 24 bass Hohner accordion when I was 5 years old. Often my father would sit down with his harmonika and play some Pomeranian Landlers or Folksongs and I tried to pick the melodies up by ear, all in the key of D naturally. My Mum had experiences of her own with the ladies orchestra, in fact she often told the story that she had been paid the fare from Vienna to Warsaw in Poland to audition for her first engagement as violinist. She had only had some occasional lessons on the instrument in Vienna, courtesy of the father of one of her friends.

She could hardly handle the violin, let alone play it for an audition, however, as the fare from Vienna to Warsaw must have cost the orchestra leader quite a bit and as he must have realised that my Mum had 'guts' to even dare apply for the job, he decided, that although she could not play the instrument at this stage, he would keep her in the ladies' band for "ornamental" purposes. She was dressed in a long white frock, stood with the other 4 ladies on stage and played the violin vigorously, the only difference being, that the bow had been treated with soap, so that not one single sound would be produced whilst she was on stage..... Needless to say, that she was given intensive instructions off stage and eventually became a fully fledged orchestra member.

She met my father whilst touring in Berlin. He was there on a political rally for the Marxists, who were then a very ambitious group of people, fighting the newly formed Nazi movement. Anyway, my parents realized early that I should not have a musical handicap and accordion lessons commenced with the one and only accordion teacher at the time in Berlin, a Mr Golzo. I don't know what his qualifications were, but he scared me out of my wits one day, I think it was my 3rd. lesson with him. He wanted me to bring a composition and play it too..... I remember not knowing what to do, so I cried and sobbed and generally must have made such an unhappy impression on my parents, that they investigated the cause of all this and decided he was the wrong teacher for their little "darling".....

Professor Schwarz, the second teacher was a lovely, sloppy, well established elderly gentleman, who taught piano and theory and had taken up the accordion as a side line. I think, as the years went by and we got to know each other very well, he learned more from my playing than he cared to admit. In any case I cannot remember him ever actually having or playing an accordion. He was a wonderful classical pianist, his forte lay in the fact that he could make a piece exciting by explaining and imagining what the composer was trying to depict. He introduced me to most of the Classical Composers, he gave me an historical sense of music development, even dared to play Mendelssohn or Rubinstein, which was against the Nazi principle of "Arian" music and musicians.

The ground work done, Prof. Schwarz instigated my enrolment into the Berlin Music Hochschule and into one of the first Accordion Academies in Berlin. From then on experts supervised my piano, violin, accordion and for a short while alto saxophone tuition. With typically German thoroughness I was taught musicology, history, psychology and performing skills and lots and lots of dry theory and counterpoint. However for nearly 8 years 'my' Professor had great, great fun in coaching me for auditions, examinations and performances.

Hitler had come into power by then, the year was 1936, the Berlin Olympics were on, millions of people visited our City, excitement everywhere. A Composer's Competition was held, my entry was chosen to be played by our School Orchestra, it felt great. Then came High School. My parents did not have too much money for private schooling, so I had to make sure to be on top of the list for a scholarship. When I received it, I had to make a speech in the school auditorium and play an accordion solo. I remember my professor told me: 'if you are

scared, just think of the professors and teachers as sitting in the audience in their underwear.....' It did help me to make stage appearances and speeches all my life as the spell of stage fright had been broken very early.

My accordion accompanied me on Scout outings, school functions, Speech day, my stage proficiency became better as a soloist. The school elected me to be assistant Choirmaster (or mistress) I was just 14. The war had broken out in 1939. I remember my Mother crying for all the unnecessary dead who were to come....and then I discovered JAZZ. I was crazy about it. I bought all the Jazz records Benny Goodman, Sachmo , Ellington and played them on our hand-wound gramophone machine. At night I listened to outlandish radio stations-forbidden under Hitler as being un-arian – and soon we were a circle of young jazz lovers trying to play that 'strange'music.

We had a little 'Sommer-cottage', where our family would spend from May to September, about 30km out of Berlin. There our jazz band would play during interval of the Brassband, when we had annual Harvest Festivals and Easter Parades. Soon the Brassband was only popular with the oldies, whilst all our young friends would clap and stamp their feet to our newly beloved jazz. Our neighbour, Gunther, played accordion, did not know a note but his rhythm was something I tried to imitate for a long time. He again got all the right notes from me, as I was reading music fluently, so we both needed each other. We also had a guitarist, playing by ear and a very good drummer. Soon our jazz band was invited to play at all sorts of functions, which were mostly unpaid, but great fun. Then Gunther volunteered to the Glorious German Army and was reported dead within a fortnight of his departure. That was the end of our jazz, and the beginning of a very hard time of war, bombs, killings, air raids, misery.

My father died in 1944 from pneumonia and malnutrition, my brother was drafted into the army in 1941. My Mum and I spent the time trying to get more food to survive and nights in the primitive air-raid shelter beneath our large flat-house. A certain sense of desperation comes over you, when you look death in the eye day after day after day. I had my accordion with me in the air-raid shelter, we often started singing altogether and if a bomb had hit us, we would have perhaps died with a defiant song on our lips. We sang songs like : das kann doch einen Seeman nicht erschuttern, translated it means something like: nothing can shatter us any more. Anyway, the bomb only took half of our house and we were still surviving. In October 1944 we were given instructions that no Higher School Certificate and Conservatorium Diploma would be issued unless all students could prove a participation in War Work for 3 months. I was studying piano and violin at the Berlin Music Hochschule since 1938, my Diploma Examination was behind me, Abitur was behind me (Abitur=HSC) and yet the precious Certificate would not come unless our class of 32 girls would enter the 'compulsory War Work'. Well my mother said, pack your bags and see if you can escape into Switzerland, the only country that was not at war, forget about Hitler and his war.

To make a long story short, 30 of the 32 girls in our class were killed during the 'glorious retreat' of the Germans from the Russian front whilst attending to their duties as ammunition carriers. I was one out of 2 who survived, simply because I escaped. To get a ticket for the railways to take you more than 60kms out of any town, one had to have a permit. I had played as a solo artist at one of the official functions of the German Army Commandant, and the General in charge was in his office the next day, when I went to him and asked him for his signature for a travel pass to Freiburg in South Germany (the direction of Switzerland). He complimented me on my accordion playing, gave me his signature and recommended me as an entertainer to the Commandant of German Army troops stationed in South Germany. Equipped with his signature and the proper Red Cross Entertainment Status and lots of official stamps on the identification card I obtained a railway ticket to Freiburg. A hasty farewell was said on the bombed out railway station in Berlin. My mother was very courageous to send me away, she also had a lot of political foresight, as most of the girls in Berlin were later raped by occupation troops and a lot of misery was spread in my generation.

On the way to Freiburg I called into many Commandants to obtain food stamps and permits. My Identification Card became to look very official. The Commandant at Freiburg looked at me incredulously before giving me yet another permit to travel further south, allegedly to re-join an Entertainment Troup at Constance, near the Swiss Border. By then the French were shooting across the Rhine, South Germany was about to be entered by the American troops from Italy and the Marocains from the West. I played the accordion.... In Freiburg.....in Black Forest towns, villages, hamlets.....I got food, I got transport and shelter. The morning after a night of sing-songs in the local tavern the villagers came up to me, they brought me lots of food, money, a horse and carriage waited for me to take me to the next village. I was overwhelmed by their hospitality, intrigued as to why they were so very kind to me, puzzled by their secrecy! Was it because I played the accordion? Was it because they felt sorry for me? When I asked, they shook their heads like wise old owls, 'well we do not only like you, but we all know your true identity..... (nudge, nudge, wink, wink!) no need to broadcast it..... We all want to help you escape, for we know you are EVA BRAUN.....'

Well Eva Braun was Hitler's mistress, but if they wanted to believe that, so be it. I got food, shelter and transport, and eventually I succeeded in playing my accordion into an Internment Camp in Basel, Switzerland. Here we were about 100 internees, all nationalities, we were safe in a war free country, and yet many an American airman or French trooper wanted nothing more than to get out and fight against the Germans. I was happy to be in the camp, it was January 1945 the war had finished in May. In the camp other people had to peel potatoes, clean the rooms etc.. I played music virtually all day long. Soon I was called to the Swiss Camp Commander, he engaged me to entertain for dinners and soirees. I learned a lot of new international tunes for we had a lot of nationalities in that camp. Once a week we were led into the Basel bath house for a

proper wash and swim. I had given as a reference the address of our friends the Brandmans in Sydney, so that the Swiss authorities could check up on my political credentials. Unfortunately Brandman's house number in Bondi had changed from 297 to 327 Bondi Road and would you believe the letter was returned by the Australian Post Office. So that meant no reference for 'Miss Elise' as I was known then. The Swiss Camp Commander was a retired army man, he took pity on me, he proposed to me, if I had married him, I would be Swiss now..... Anyway, no reference, no marriage to a 68 year old, the war finished on May 8th 1945, I was deported back to Germany on May 10th. I remember sitting with the 2 Swiss policemen at the Swiss German Frontier, my accordion in a knapsack – the troupe of 12 Marocains with a French sergeant marching towards us. The Swiss felt so very sorry for me, that they gave me some chocolate and made me drink a glass of Pernot as a farewell gesture. I was collected by the Frenchat the German side of the border they locked me into an attic until they clarified the position. They knew I was German, I could speak French – thanks to school French, they knew I came from an Internment camp so I could not be a Nazi, what to do with me!!! I sat in the attic and took out my accordion. With the enormous number of international songs and melodies I had picked up at the camp it was not hard to guess that their curiosity would get the better of them. So, before long I shared a good French meal with them and played the accordion, what else!!! At midnight the next day, I was collected by army jeep, the French always do things at an unearthly hour to give it excitement and mystery (I think). The trip was dark, short and wild. I was presented to the French Commander of Occupation in the district of Singen. Vous etes une musicienne? Vous parlez l'français? Oui and I also speak a little English. Bon, we need an interpreter. And so I worked from May 1945 to the middle of 1947 as an interpreter and musician. My accordion was quite tattered by then, it was a 120 bass Rauner with a master coupler which you could shift with your chin. In due course I was treated more or less like French Army personnel and enjoyed my privileges, including my own car (taken from the Germans) and a little dog mascot. American Officers came often to visit the French and my knowledge of English, French and German was as much an asset as my accordion, not only for the officers, but for the kitchen staff and all the other little working bees which are necessary to run an occupation force. 1947 made me very restless, I did not know if my mother was alive in Berlin and if my brother was a prisoner of war. I wanted to go back to Berlin to find out. Equipped with the necessary French identification I took 3 weeks to reach Berlin, the Russian border was a big hindrance. Eventually I got to our street, my Mum was looking out of the window and when I called out to her, she was so overjoyed that for a moment I thought she would fall out of the window 2 storeys up. It was a very emotional homecoming, we both had not known of each other since our good-bye in December 1944. Our flat was partly bombed out. Mum had very little food, money was next to nothing....I became again an interpreter and the music was more lucrative, more money and more American cigarettes for the black market. My accordion made me the star in an 8 piece all male Dance orchestra – Lizzy and her 8 soloists. I stood in high heels on stage from 8pm Saturday night to 3am on Sunday

morning. I played and sang in 3 languages (in a fashion like Marlene!), soon there was plenty of work in American, English and Russian Army Clubs, we were paid one carton of cigarettes for the night. One single cigarette was worth one egg on the black market, 4 cigarettes equaled ½ pound of sugar, we were rich. I remember I played one whole night for one lousy, single LEMON! My accordion took me to Chinese weddings, which lasted for 3 days, to French gay parties, to German beer drinking Festivals. I could even afford a ticket to Frank Sinatra's big show in Berlin. Wow!

Then one morning in 1948 the Russian Military Police came to my door, they took me away, threw me into a lightless cellar with all sorts of creepy rats and vermin. After an endless time of insecure waiting and not knowing what would happen, they dragged me into a room for interrogation. From the accusations, it appeared that in their Russian logic, I was a spy because I had worked for the French as interpreter. I spoke English and I was working with my music in Russian clubs, I was a spy. Did I speak fluent Russian? Njet! Ah but who would believe me. I insisted I was only a musician. The Russian sergeant brought out one of the many requisitioned accordions and asked me to play..... I did, mostly Russian songs, which I could remember in my anxiety. This night I slept at home in my own bed..... Oh, my accordion!

1949 my husband's family made application to let me come to Australia. We had known each other from Berlin; I was the girl friend of my husband's sister Eva. Anyway, Fred was not my husband then, but he married me in 1950, I was officially one of the first Australian war brides. My career as an accordion teacher had started in Berlin and in order to earn a bit more money for us, I took up my former profession as soon as possible. I had started Junior teaching at the age of 14 and certainly had no trouble to continue during the war and post-war years to at least keep up my teaching and playing in good practice. In Australia a new challenge presented itself as quite a lot of terminology was new to me. However the old way of thorough-groundwork in teaching music is still valid and probably always will be. I learned a lot of the new style of Classical Accordion with my daughter, Margaret, who started learning the accordion with me when she was 4½ and I expanded a lot of my own system of teaching with some of my very gifted students, like Cheryl Gadge (MacInnes) and Ross Lombardo. We explored together and when my son John took up the accordion we opened new vistas with extensive manipulation of chord work with the accordion. I could teach piano, violin, I have knowledge of the alto sax, but I found that there are many, if not too many piano teachers and my heart is really with the accordion. When I decided to do something to get accordionists in Australia together by instigating the Accordion Society of Australia I only filled a long existing gap for accordionists. That was in 1970, we now have 1987 and our Society has truly expanded beyond anybody's expectations. We are a truly Australian multicultural body capable of anything, if we set our minds to it. My last word on the matter has not yet been spoken, but my thoughts are as follows: if we do not get recognition as the ASA and the accordion is not fully accepted by all States and in all schools and by the Australian Music Examination Board

then we can only blame ourselves for not trying hard enough. We have the students, the talents, the teachers, the brains there is really no limit to our ultimate aims. Teaching has always been a pleasure for me. Many times I have learned more from my students than they from me. For instance when Sylvia Barnett, a blind student learned from me, we did everything by ear. I played a tune first, she would play it on her 'Jittenjack' as she called her accordion affectionately. I learned that to Sylvia the accordion was a living part of her life. I began to talk more friendly-like to my accordion also. Then I learned how obsession can shape a man by teaching an elderly chap for the one and only purpose in his life: he wanted to play 'the old grey mare' on Anzac Day in the RSL Club. He achieved his goal and told me so, stone- drunk at midnight when he had been thrown out of the club. How happy this had made him! Another chap used playing the accordion to get his long desired divorce from his nagging wife and thanked me profusely for the chance I had given him!

Often I look back and I must confess that my life without my accordion and without music would have been intolerable. A life without music and nutty friends, a life without witless enemies, a life without whinging students, a life without playing in tune together, a life without the unexpected..... No not for me!

Thank you Friedrich Buschmann for inventing the 'hand-organ'.



Mrs B with Ross Maio



Mrs B. with Tony Andrios



Mrs B & Chau Pui Yin (Hong Kong)

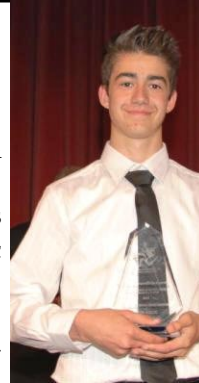


Mrs. B., Elizabeth Jones, Ross Maio

Edin Kocic **“Young Bosnian of the year in Australia”**

What a wonderful way for a young accordionist to finish an already very successful year.

After becoming an absolute winner at the Accordion Festivals and competitions, Australian Accordion Champion, Edin Kocic was awarded another prestigious award.



On Saturday 26th November in Melbourne, Bosnians in Australia celebrated Statehood Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a very solemn manner. This is traditional celebration of one of the most important dates in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized by the Council of BiH Organizations of Australia.

In the beautiful Town Hall in Ivanhoe, in a wonderful festive atmosphere, gathered close to 500 Bosnians from all over Australia to celebrate this very important date. There were guests coming from Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and even from Perth, which is 4000 km away from Melbourne. This was a third year in a row that Dino Kocic was invited as a special guest to perform with his accordion in the official part of the program.

Program started with Bosnian choir “Sevdalinka” performing Australian Anthem and two traditional Bosnian songs accompanied by Dino.



After that Dino performed a medley of seven traditional Bosnian songs and he was also accompanied for a lady singer performing another two Bosnian songs.

As is customary at these ceremonies, the Council of BiH Organizations of Australia granted recognition to deserving individuals and organizations for their contributions to the development and affirmation of the Bosnian diaspora in Australia, and so was on this evening.

Two most prestigious of the awards are: “Senior Citizen of the year” and “Young Citizen of the year.”

It was a very pleasant surprise to hear that Dino Kocic was a winner of “Young Citizen of the year” award this year. President of the Council of BiH Organizations of Australia Senada Softic-Telaloviæ announcing the winner, among other things said:

“Bosnian community in Australia should be proud of the young Bosnians who with their successes and results, promote its name and in the best light represent all of us in Australia. One such person is our winner this year. The young man who in his 16 years has won as many awards, honors and titles as for someone else's three lives and above all, these awards are not local in character but the best among the best in Australia. This guy has been awarded by us a few years ago, when it was announced that there are even greater success ahead of him, and he did not disappoint.

Winner in the category “Young Citizen of the year” is extraordinary talented artist and a virtuoso on the accordion, the champion of Australia Edin (Dino) Kocic from Melbourne”.

Last three years Dino was very active in Bosnian Community and has performed with Folklore group “**Dukat**” at many Multicultural Festivals, with Bosnian Choir “**Sevdalinka**,” he also performed for Bosnian Ambassador at the Bosnian Embassy in Canberra. He participated at countless Multicultural events and Festivals throughout Victoria and Australia. Dino is regularly performing as a guest artist at every cultural event, Humanitarian Concerts and traditional Festivals organized by Bosnian Community, other ex Yugoslav communities and for Ukrainian community.

Council of BiH Organizations of Australia recognized and honored Dino’s contribution to promoting Bosnian name, tradition and culture, and awarded him for his hard work. This should be a stimulus for even greater success in the future for this young artist.



Dino with his parents and sister



BH award winners

*ASA NSW ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE
AT GLEBE MUSIC FESTIVAL*

On the 13th of November, the NSW orchestra was invited to perform at the Glebe Music festival. With a lot of rehearsal and building up of repertoire we were ready to hit the stage. Invitations had been sent out, advertisements published and we waited for the crowds.

It was a surprisingly large turn out, and the orchestra treated the concert as a practice run for our concert at The Basement the following evening. The concert ran for approximately 2 hours with an intermission with cakes and coffee provided by orchestra members and their families.

The concert included songs by the Orchestra, A duet by Amelia and Mathilde, a solo performance by Vince Tavernese and was closed by one of our all time favourites; Ross Maio's 'Aussie Medley'.

The crowd loved the concert so much we were invited to return to perform again, and we are looking forward to the opportunity.



ACCORDIONS AT THE BASEMENT



On the 14th of November, 2011 the members of Accordions Alfresco, including 'Vince Tavernese, Dominique Granturco, Jedda Kassis, Rob Scott-Mitchell, Cheryl Mills, Mathilde Auroux and Amelia Granturco took to the stage for a second time at The Basement for 'Accordion Night'.

The group performed a number of pieces, and were even invited to perform an encore the audience enjoyed it so much.

Accordions Alfresco were followed by Lukas Maio performing a few jazzy numbers, Marcello Maio performing a solo rendition of 'Adios Nonino' by Astor Piazzola, Marcello was then joined on stage by Eddie Bronson. This was followed by a piece by Ross Maio demonstrating the abilities of Rolands latest V-Accordion. The Maio trio with Eddie then took the stage together and performed Czardas.

After another short intermission the stage was taken by the evenings MC, George 'Washingmachine' and his quartet. The evening was a success especially for the ASA's Accordions Alfresco ensemble and they are continuing to go from strength to strength.

Amelia Granturco - Sydney

Melbourne Accordion Orchestra Annual 'Cup Eve' Concert

The Melbourne Accordion Orchestra held their annual 'Melbourne Cup Eve' concert on October 31st at the Coatesville Bowls Club in Bentleigh, a south east suburb of Melbourne. The first half began with the orchestra playing 'Rhythm of Time' by Eugene Derbenko, followed by 'Ramona' by Mabel Wayne, 'Pierre de Lune' by Mayer Gilles, 'La Paloma' by Sebastian Yradier, 'Waltz No.2' by D. Schostakovich, 'Tango of the Roses' by Schreier-Botero and finished with 'Frankie Boy Forever' a medley of Frank Sinatra's favourites arranged by Werner Kunsman. This was followed by a beautiful duet 'Winter' from the Four Seasons by Antonio Vivaldi, performed by Iryna Stepko and Dino Kocic. A 12 year old student of Iryna Stepko, Arthur Noamenko, performed 'La Banquet' and 'Marushka' a Ukranian piece with precision and passion which received a generous applause from the audience. Dino Kocic returned as soloist playing 'Prelude' by Mischa Herman and 'Impasse' by Angelis.



For the first time, the Melbourne Accordion Quartet, led by Palmi Snorrason' supported by Jeanette Benzing-accordion, Wayne Mannix- drums and the concert compere Peter Mazuerek- bass guitar, played a polka 'spick and span' by P. Frozini. Jeanette departed leaving Palmi, Wayne and Peter to per-

form a few pieces from the musical 'Black Orpheus' including 'Morning of the Carnival' and 'Samba de Orpheus'. Palmi's smooth playing combined with the rich tones of his Scandalli entranced the audience and was a fitting end to the first half of the concert. The Bentleigh Organ Society ladies committee then prepared a generous supper whilst those interested were able to buy the orchestra's latest CD;s.

The second half saw the return of the Orchestra playing; 'Phantom of the Opera, Finculi Fincula, Under Paris Skies, The Blues Factory, Rumanish and finishing with their favourite piece 'Carnival de Paris' by Dario G. The secretary of the Bentleigh Organ Club, Mr. Cliff Restarick, took the stage to thank the orchestra for a wonderful evening of beautiful and varied music and the members and friends for coming to the concert. He invited the orchestra to return in 2012. With good attendance numbers and CD sales the event was a great success for the Orchestra and the promotion of the Accordion.
Lee Pucini - Melbourne

BIOGRAPHY OF PETER PICCINI 1936 to 2011



Like father, like son: Piccini with his father, Pietro, in 1952.

Compiled from an obituary in the Western Australian and notes from David Krygger an Honorary Life member of the ASA.

Peter Piccini died at the age of 75, "he was a virtuoso of the piano accordion, an instrument his father is accredited with introducing to Australia. Father taught son, producing a technically brilliant yet sensitive player."

Peter Piccini was born in Sydney in June 1936 to Pietro Piccini and his wife Veronica. Pietro was a showman from the Piedmont region of Italy. Pietro arrived in Australia in 1922 and introduced the piano accordion and entertained Queensland cane field workers. In Sydney and Melbourne he performed in vaudeville in Tivoli theatres and also provided musical accompaniment for silent movies. In 1934 he appeared in a sound movie "Strike Me Lucky" starring Roy Rene. It was only natural that Peter should play the accordion and at the age of seven he performed solo at a school concert. David remembers his first performance on radio, at age 14, when he played a piece called "Ragamuffin" and "was already exhibiting extreme skills and an inbred gift rarely seen in someone so young".

Peter travelled the world and performed with some of the biggest stars of the day. These included Frank Ifield, Matt Munroe, Max Bygraves, the Deltones, the Drifters, Andy Stewart and Liberace.



Friend of the famous: Piccini with Liberace in 1979.

At the age of 19 Peter went to London and was broadcasting for the BBC. He toured Italy and did TV shows and recordings. He then returned to Perth where his parents had relocated. He met his wife, Fina, in 1961 and they married in 1963.

Peter made many appearances on the ABC and was appointed musical director for Channel 9, where he was involved with the Channel Niners Club. In Perth, his talents as a conductor and arranger were much in demand. He became very active in composing and has left behind a great legacy of published works.



Performer: Piccini in his role as as musical director of STW Channel 9 in Perth.



Lifelong partners: Peter Piccini with wife Fina in 1961, the year they were married.

To Fina and the family the ASA sends condolences.

ASA Archival Material

A reminder that an ASA research library and Archival material is housed at 5/4 Wills Place Mittagong.

For further information contact June Jones on junala1@bigpond.com



Cordi's Column
(A Blast from the Past story)

SURVIVOR

May I introduce myself? My name is Challenge and I was manufactured by L. Busilacchio in Italy. I came a long way by boat and the voyage must have taken at least 3 months. My structure is supposed to withstand the rigors of the Australian climate. On landing in Sydney I was displayed in a music shop called Nicholson's and I was waiting for a potential buyer.

My vital statistics are: 120 basses and a bass change on the left; 24 white notes and 17 black keys on the right. To keep me breathing, bellows were added consisting of 14 folds. If I want to change my voice I have four couplers which give me quite a range of pitch. When I have to work hard and get very tired a button is provided on the left hand side of my body to let the air out. Also I am fitted out with some nice soft leather straps. My weight is 12 kg and my colour is red. I was also provided with a nice bed, lined with soft yellow velvet into which I nestle when not in use. My price tag in 1950 is 100 pounds.

Finally I was bought by a young keen person, after paying 10 pounds deposit and 25 shillings per week to be paid off. I was really excited to be squeezed and pushed. My boss took lessons and started to practice on my bass buttons and very soon I was talking – C maj, G maj and F maj. Soon the right hand came into play and on the white keys and black keys some simple tunes. After a year or so my repertoire broadened and I started to go out.

I made lots of trips by steam train to the Blue Mountains, where I provided my 'voice' for sing a long camp fires and camp reunions. I was invited to weddings and to birthday parties. Later on I made many trips in the boot of a car to surface in a village or town miles away. I was also able to create a happy atmosphere in lots of places where people danced, talked and sang.

About 5 years ago I had to go to a hospital for repairs. After 38 years my keys were gnashing, my bellows were leaking, some bass buttons were sticking, the straps were dried out and my voice box needed a bit of tuning. I must admit I was worn out and tired.

After the hospitalization I feel much better now and I can sing in tune again. I may not be in pristine condition, my keys are a bit yellow and my body has suffered the scars of life, but as an accordion I am a survivor. I hope that I will not be a museum piece for a long time to come.

Merry Christmas
Happy playing

Cordi

SNIPPETS AND GOSSIP.

A member recently sent a newspaper clipping about never being too old to learn music. The article was about a 65 year old gentleman who was learning to play the cello. The principles are the same for all instruments. Teachers and students agree that basically having a goal and the determination to achieve it, and having some innate talent. This gentleman is not alone in taking up a musical instrument in later life, many mature people do it, despite what many think. One thing all the students agree upon is the need to practice. Even a short practice once or twice a day can make a small marvel happen. As you progress you will be able to join groups and thus improve your playing skills.

NSW Christmas Party 2011

On Monday night the 5th of December, the NSW branch of the Accordion Society held their annual Christmas party. The evening was filled with music, especially Christmas carols, by the members of the NSW orchestra, a very special visit from 'Mrs. Claus'. (Thank you to Denise Kassis for playing the role, in Santa's absence, he is very busy this time of year). The orchestra members received their Kris Kringle gifts from Mrs. Claus and everyone shared a wonderful Christmas meal.



The NSW orchestra is looking forward to performing at a few nursing homes around Sydney in the lead up to Christmas. It is sure, as always, to be an enriching experience for both the members of the orchestra and the residents.

We wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and holiday season.

Team NSW

★
★
JEDDA KASSIS' EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

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 As we all know there are so many positives about music and the accordion.

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 The identifiable tone it produces, the vast variety of genres it suits and the

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 sheer beauty of its musicians...you must all agree! But most of all, the simple

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 fact that it produces music has led us all, I'm sure, to fond experiences.

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 A few weeks ago, I undertook a practical placement at Sir Eric Woodward

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 Memorial School in St. Ives, a school which caters for students with severe

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 disabilities and autism. This has got to be one of my most memorable experi-

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 ences of sharing the accordion for so many reasons. I spent most of my time

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 with the junior class - children aged 4-12years. With next to no speech, se-

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 vere physical and intellectual disabilities and most with hearing and visual

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 impairments, I learnt so much both as a person and teacher. When I took out

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 the instrument and struck a chord, the teachers were immediately intrigued.

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 Then as I began to play a few tunes, it was highly evident that the students

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 were engaging with this experience. One young boy in particular always

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 lights up, smiles and laughs when he hears sound. During a Spanish tune, I

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 added a gliss and he immediately laughed. I took hold of his hand and

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 played a few glisses. The engagement and excitement that this young boy

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 showed in his large smile and laughter, was instantly shared with all. This

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 was one of the highlights of my time at the school. Another boy is still devel-

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 oping his likeability towards music. As he physically explored the keyboard

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 with much focus and intrigue, he began to laugh and clap as he produced

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 the sound from the keys.

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 To end the day, I played Christmas carols to the school. Other children were

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 dancing and singing in their wheel chairs but it didn't take long for the La-

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 tino cleaner to ask for a tango and soon take the floor with her dance moves.

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 She then so passionately informed me that the Argentines call La Cumpar-

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 sita their own, when in fact it originated in Uruguay.

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 It just goes to show, yet again, the wonderful power of music and of course,

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 'our' instrument.

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Jedda Kassis – Sydney

END OF AN ERA FOR THE NZAA

An end of an Era has occurred with both the Accordion Examination Board of NZ and the NZAA having new committees

NZAA

President	Sonja Palinich
Vice President	Harley Jones
Secretary	Heather Masefield
Treasurer	Amber Masefield
Competitions Secretary	Megan Jennings
Committee	Campbell Bettridge, Jessica Chen, Stephen Cope, Dennis Lovatt, Jenna Murray, Sonja Palinich, Tamba Young, George Xu.

Accordion Examination Board of New Zealand

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Chairman	Marcel Riethmann APDNZ ATDNZ AIRMT B.Ed Dip Tchg
Vice Chairman	Harley Jones APDNZ ATDNZ LTCL FRIMT
Secretary	Heather Masefield AIRMT
NZAA President	Sonja Palinich ATDNZ AIRMT BA LLB
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NZAA NEWS DEC 2011

COUPE MONDIALE 2011

Contributed by Heather Masefield

Early on Friday morning, 30th September, after an 8 hour delay, a group of 17 keen Kiwis left for Shanghai. We were joined by others from all over the world, making a party of 30 Kiwi's – the largest fielded by any country other than the host country. Our late arrival caused a crush on the bus to our 2 hotels. The competitors were staying at the University Campus where the competition was hosted. Kevin & Harley had decided to host a "Kiwi Cocktail Party" and word had got around so President Raymond Bodell agreed to let us use his suite to host the 50 that turned up – many of them claiming "honorary Kiwis" status for the night!

The stunning publicity posters were all over the hotel, campus & performance venues. Whilst entry to the competitions was free, tickets to the concerts were \$50NZ and for the Galliano concert \$100NZ. We tried to get everyone tickets for all of these events – difficult as some were already sold out.

The first day was full of meetings and in the evening was the opening concert, attended by the Mayor of Shanghai, who generated a large amount of publicity. Performers included our very own Grayson Masefield appearing along with BayanMix, and Richard Galliano. We heard the especially commissioned work by Head of Composition at Canterbury University, Gao Ping (Grayson & I had seen the uncompleted score as he was writing it at Canterbury Uni when we were in Christchurch in May). The venue was a large auditorium & they had built additional staging especially for the Coupe Mondiale. Dignitaries were acknowledged & speeches made, then it was off to the party in the hotel foyer.

On Sunday we had an early start with a group photo of all Chinese dignitaries & overseas visitors. Then it was the draw for playing order. This was done electronically by the Secretary General's son in a smooth & easy fashion, with each of the candidates pulling out a card & this coming up on the screen with their country & flag & position drawn. New Zealand's 4 contestants, Eddie Giffney & BorKuan Song in the Piano class & Alexandra Reekie & Patrick Liu in the Junior Virtuoso Class were all happy with the places they had drawn.

These were the largest number of contestants to take part in a Coupe Mondiale, with nearly half of them being Chinese that had especially prepared for this major event in their own country. This made for huge classes – 37 in the Coupe class, all playing one and a half hours of top level music. Three venues were needed with dedicated panels of adjudicators (including Grayson, Stephanie Poole & I). We started instantly with the classes, a day earlier than normal to fit in all of the 7 categories of competition.

In the parks thousands of accordionists were performing all over Shanghai to commemorate the first time the Coupe Mondiale had been held in China. That evening it was the "World Champions" concert with Grayson performing Classical with winners 2002 Alexander Pouleuv and 2004 Alexander Selivanov. I'm proud to say that Grayson stole the show playing a new work that Seminov commented afterwards that he did not think possible to play on the accordion!

On Monday both Patrick & Alexandria played well & were pleased with their performances. The venue was packed out, especially with all of the Kiwis & Australians piling into the room to hear them. The ASA had a group perform in the Ensemble category & they also performed in one of the parks.

Then it was off to the Galliano concert. This was held in the Shanghai Concert Hall (similar vintage to the Auckland Town Hall but larger) where Gary Daverne, Harley, Stephanie, Lionel and I had all performed in 1988. What a miraculous change, it had been moved for a motorway, the slum area raised & the hall set back down in a grassed area & totally refurbished - it took us a while to work out that it was the same building (bar was in the same place). This was the highlight for many that had not heard Galliano live before.

The Piano class was held the next day. This was to be the last time this was held as it becomes the Masters Class in 2012, open to all instruments. Both Bor-Kuan & Eddie performed creditably. Then it was off to the concert of the "New Generation" with Grayson again performing, this time in duet with Pietro Adranga. He had learnt to take his accordion off before the final bows & presentation of flowers - they could leak over the instrument! Alanah was keen to take them off him & managed to get in many of the photos taken with fans, translating that he was her cousin!

Both the Junior Coupe & the Senior Coupe Second Round continued the next day followed by the first of two rehearsals for the World Accordion Orchestra V - 180 accordionists tightly packed on stage. The basis of this group was the 80 strong Childrens Palace Baide Orchestra from Shanghai. Lian helped with the translations, Chinese to English, English to Chinese.

The evening concert was a live TV broadcast of the Senior Virtuoso Class with the 2nd round of 12 performers. Next was BayanMix - a Russian Duo of astonishing vitality, lots of action, movement and audience involvement. The final round of the Coupe Mondiale was held the next morning with just 7 contestants out of the 37 remaining. Grayson had adjudicated this class for 4 long days. Then on to the final Congress & the presentation of the results.

Thanks to our hard working contestants for all of the hours of practice they put in.

Piano Class	Eddie Giffney	11 th
	Bor-Kuan Song	15 th
Junior Virtuoso	Patrick Li	13 th
	Alexandra Reekie	24 th

http://www.coupemondiale.org/2011/cn_report_video_kiwi.htm

The link above will get you into the site to see the New Zealand contestants performances in Shanghai.

A rush to get to the Renzo Ruggieri Concert before the Closing Ceremony where the prizes were given out and the winning contestants performed. Grayson also performed as the concert master of the World Hohner Accordion Orchestra before taking part in the WAOV with most of the other Kiwi accordionists who had borrowed instruments, - brand new ones - which they signed afterwards so they could be sold.

Our final day was spent shopping and packing our shopping before a final "Kiwi Party" before we all dispersed to the world.

Thanks must go to our Chinese hosts Li Cong & Crystal Wang who were exceptionally accommodating to our Kiwi group. The 64th Coupe Mondiale was an incredibly successful Coupe Mondiale for them and the China Accordion Association.

If you would like to view the entire photo gallery prepared by Kevin Friedrich & Harley Jones please go to www.coupemondiale.org click on China and then click on Daily Reports.

Heather Masefield – Auckland NZ

Lack of Students is a concern

At Congress concern was expressed about the lack of students availing themselves of AMEB Examinations. It was suggested that teachers should encourage their students to sit for these examinations. The choice of music in the syllabus was criticized but the syllabus will not be altered until the numbers increase. We are in danger of losing our place in the AMEB syllabus if numbers do not increase.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ASA

...continued

The opening report of 2005 praised the efforts of younger members of the Society who spent some time during the Christmas period entertaining people in Nursing Homes and bringing some joy to them, a very worthwhile activity. April saw a successful State Championships in NSW. The new State Champion was Ann-Elise Koerntjes from Victoria but now living in Sydney. The April Championship was followed in May by the AATA Championships. A successful weekend for all competitors and for Ann-Elise who won the top class the International Championship class. The weekend following this, members from the NSW Division flew to Auckland to participate in the NZAA competitions. The orchestra performed at the opening evening concert and again at the closing concert on Sunday. Competitions were held on the Saturday and Sunday and members of the orchestra competed in solo and duo sections. Ann-Elise was again successful winning the South Pacific Championship class. The NSW orchestra was awarded the Ben Emmett Memorial Trophy for Orchestra performance, - a great honour indeed. In between all the competitions the orchestra performed at two major concerts at the Russian Club and Club Marconi both very successful.

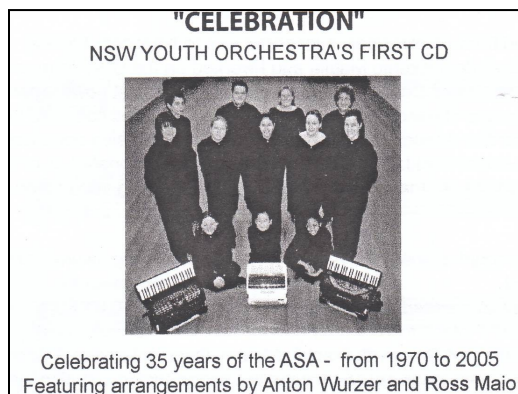
The annual International Festival was held in July in Melbourne. Victoria had been in a lull for some years but was now becoming more active. 2005 saw a growth in membership and the formation of active orchestras. The Festival was a great success. There were 13 solo classes, 4 duet classes, trio, band and orchestra classes as well as the usual pop/jazz, traditional/folk, and showmanship classes. Both the senior and junior composer/arranger classes were supported. The Australasian and Australian National Champion was Ann-Elise Koerntjes. A very successful Farewell Concert was held at the Austrian Club in Heidelberg.

News came from Canberra that Anton Wurzer, who had been on the tour to Innsbruck, had formed an accordion group and it was playing together and performing at a retirement village and a pre-school concert.

In October Ann-Elise Koerntjes competed in the Coupe Mondiale in the Piano Accordion class. The coupe Mondiale was held in Portugal. The week before she left for Portugal she attended the Monday night rehearsal which gave her the opportunity to present her programme. The orchestra and several members came to hear her play. She played an interesting programme extremely well. The audience showed its appreciation with enthusiasm. The NSW division presented Ann-Elise with a cheque to help with her expenses. She was placed eight in the championships.



Lukas Maio was invited to perform at Encore the showcase of the year's top HSC music examination performers. In September/October The NSW Youth Orchestra Released their first CD



2005 had been a very busy and exciting year for the ASA and with the hope of seeing further development it was decided to hold the 2006 in Sydney.
to be continued.....

PAST CHAMPIONS OF THE ACCORDION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

- DR. ELIZABETH JONES -

- ◇ AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CHAMPION-FREE BASS 1987, 1990, 1991, 1992
- ◇ AUSTRALASIAN CHAMPION - FREE BASS 1982, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992
- ◇ PRESIDENT OF ASA 1998 -

Elizabeth Jones was born in Sydney, Australia and began her studies on the accordion at the age of five, first with Else Brandman and from 1990 with Margaret Brandman - Blake. After completing a Bachelor of Music degree at Sydney University in 1992, she joined the Advanced Postgraduate Course at the Royal Academy of Music in London where she studied accordion with Professor Owen Murray until the end of 1995 and piano with Antoinetta Notariello until the end of 1996. In 2008 Elizabeth was awarded her Doctor of Creative Arts at the University of Western Sydney, for her portfolio on researching the pedagogical and performance styles of the accordion.

Her concert performances have taken her to London, Hong Kong, China, New Zealand and throughout Australia, where she has performed as guest artist and recitalist at major venues. In 1999 Elizabeth performed with Opera Australia in their winter season production of *Wozzeck* and also performed with Cockatours Productions in their season of *Fiddler on the Roof* at the Hills Centre. She has given numerous broadcasts for the ABC and 2MBSFM, as well as featuring on recordings and Win News, Wollongong. Elizabeth has collaborated with many composers based in Sydney to promote the accordion as a concert instrument. The composers include Eric Gross, Margaret Brandman - Blake, Ko-Ting Sung, Terumi Narashumi, and Andrew McBirnie (U.K.) Amongst her premieres are *And The Sun Danced On Easter Morn'* an intermezzo for accordion and organ, *Tanghetto con Bandoneon* for accordion and mandolins and *Concertino* for accordion and orchestra all by Eric Gross. *Concert Fantasia* for accordion and strings has also been a project between Elizabeth Jones and Eric Gross. In 2004 Elizabeth performed with Oz Opera in their premiere of *Midnite* as part of the Melbourne International Festival. During 2005 she performed in the Australian premiere of *Menschen am Sonntag* with Ensemble Offspring as part of the Sydney Film Festival. In 2006 she was guest artist with the Australia Ensemble for the performance of Hindemith's *Kammermusik Nr.1*. Elizabeth has performed as principal guest artist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, premiered new works with Chronology Arts and participated in the Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Elizabeth also has a strong interest in performing world music. In 2003 Elizabeth joined the trio *Tempo di Tango* with violinist Maggie Ferguson and cellist John Napier. The trio then developed into an *orchestra tipica* and performed regularly for the nationwide

They performed as part of the Café Carnivale series and are artists with the Australian Jazz Agency. During 2006 she has also collaborated with Stephen Lalor building a world music repertoire. In 2007 Elizabeth also joined the tango group *Fuego Lento* a group that comprises of some of Sydney's foremost session musicians. (see below for details of their CD)

Elizabeth also performs on the bandoneon and piano at various venues around Sydney and also accompanies students for examinations and auditions.

Among her academic presentations are published research papers through the International Society of Music Education and the University of Western Sydney. Elizabeth was head of accordion studies at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music, NSW until 2006 when she accepted the post of Tutor of Accordion studies and Coordinator of Contemporary Performance at the Australian Institute of Music, Sydney. In 2008 she accepted the position of Coordinator of General Studies, Classical, Music Theatre and Arts Management at the Australian Institute of Music. Elizabeth has been Head of Classical Performance at the Australian Institute of Music since 2009.

In 2000 Elizabeth was awarded the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust Fund award for further study in Canada, America and Denmark. The Australian Arts Council also awarded her an individual development grant in 2003 to attend the Las Vegas International Accordion Convention.

Contemporary Tango CD out now



Julian Gough - Alto sax
Daniel Weltlinger - Violin
Elizabeth Jones - Accordion
James Menzies - Double Bass
Daniel Wallace-Crabbe - Piano

fuegolento.com.au

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APPLICATION/RENEWAL FOR MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATION



ACCORDION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (Incorporated NSW)
(incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984)

I,
(full name of applicant)

of
(address)

Phone Email

hereby apply to become a member **OR RENEW** my membership of the abovementioned association. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the association for the time being in force.

.....
Signature of applicant Date

All memberships are renewable on 1st. August each year.
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ASA Accordion Review is published 4 times per year. Advertising and Editorial Deadlines:

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December	1. 2012

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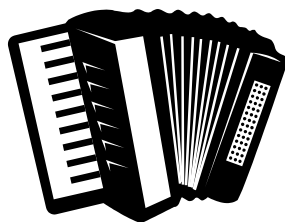
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