

THE ACCORDION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

# ACCORDION REVIEW



OSSIE MAZZEI HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY

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SEPTEMBER 2013

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## *Hello from the Editor*

*This is the first edition with Rob Scott-Mitchell as our newly elected President. A big thank you to Rob for taking on this role and it must be daunting for him therefore I hope everyone will assist and support Rob where possible. Refer page 4 for a summary of other committee positions.*

*A big congratulations to our Honorary member Ossie Mazzei on his 100th birthday. Ossie has been the backbone to the accordion in Queensland and a huge support to ASA members and orchestras. A brief summary of his life may be found on pages 8 and 9.*

*Thank you to members for contributing to this Review and also to Bernadette Conlon, (which I am sure many members will remember) for sending an 'hello' all the way from USA, refer page 21.*

*We all know accordionist numbers are dwindling and it is important we promote the accordion whenever possible and the AATA Massed Orchestra planned for June 2014 is an excellent initiative and exciting for accordionist to participate, refer page 15.*

*I hope you enjoy this edition, happy reading.*

*Bye for now,*

*Cheryle Mills*

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Note: Please direct all ASA mail to Secretary/Treasurer  
51 Bogalara Road,  
OLD TOONGABBIE NSW 2146

## *ACTING PRESIDENTS REPORT*

It has been a year of change for the ASA, most notably the unexpected resignation of our longstanding president, Elizabeth Jones, in February this year. The ASA would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to both Elizabeth and June Jones for their many years of outstanding service to the cause of promoting the accordion in Australia. We wish them the very best for the future.

Elizabeth's resignation resulted in a 'casual vacancy' for the position of President, which has been filled in the interim by the vice-presidents, Rob Scott-Mitchell and Denise Kassis. Due to this we ran out of time to organize the annual festival, and so the committee decided to cancel it for the first time in many years. The NSW State Championship was also cancelled due to lack of numbers.

Sylvia Granturco and Cheryle Mills have both devoted much time to taking up the slack left by June Jones relinquishing her job as Secretary, with Cheryle also taking on the Accordion Review, which I know from personal experience is a very time consuming job. Many thanks to both of them.

The number of active orchestral members of the ASA continues to dwindle nationally. In NSW we are down to five players, which is the minimum needed to fill the parts. For us this is both a blessing and a curse. On one hand our ensemble playing is better than ever before, but on the other, it makes it a little intimidating for newcomers to step in. There have been a handful give it a go over the last 12 months, and we always welcome them with open arms and defer to easy pieces, but so far none have stayed. Ross Maio continues to make time in his busy schedule to coach us when he can. We love you Ross!

The NSW ensemble has had a fairly quiet performance year. In October we played at the Glebe Music Festival for the second year running. This was a triumphal performance as evidenced by the response of the audience in the packed hall. We also played at Ferndale Nursing Home and did a couple of Bunnings fundraising performances. The main focus of the year has been rehearsing for the recording of a new CD. Thanks to Amelia's friend Nick we were able to hire Trackdown Studio for a nominal fee. In July we made the recording, with Nick volunteering his fabulous skills as a recording engineer. Amelia and Nick are now well into editing the recording and we hope to release it by the end of the year. We are planning a regional tour next year to promote the CD.

Thanks to all ASA members who continue to volunteer time and energy to organizing performances, fundraising etc.

*Rob Scott-Mitchell*

28<sup>th</sup> September 2013

# *ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING*

## *September 29th, 2013*

*The ASA AGM held on Sunday Sept 29th was the first to be conducted over Skype linking Victoria, South Australia and Sydney with the NSW Committee situated at the home of our Vice President Denise Kassis. A few minor glitches with sound and occasion drop outs but overall it proved successful.*

*All ASA positions were declared vacant and nominations put forward and all the positions filled as follows;*

### **President**

Rob Scott-Mitchell

### **Vice Presidents**

Denise Kassis  
Silvia Kocic

### **Treasurer**

Vince Granturco

### **Vice Treasurer**

Leo Kroon

### **Secretary**

Sylvia Granturco

### **Newsletter Editor**

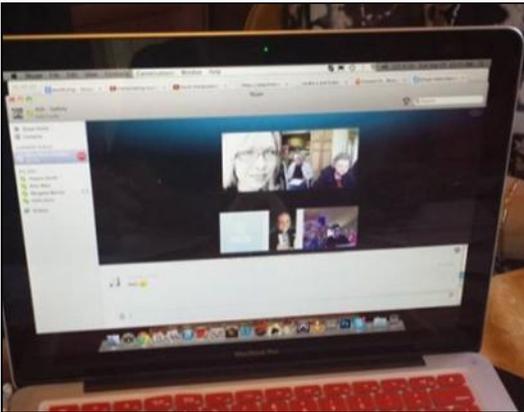
Cheryle Mills

### **Public Relations**

Jedda Kassis  
Dominique Granturco

### **Events Sub Committee**

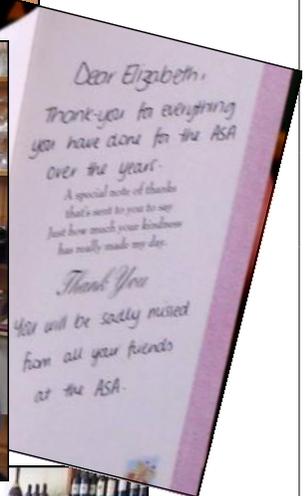
Rob Scott-Mitchell  
Yvonne Smith  
Jedda Kassis  
Dominique Granturco  
John Kalkbrenner Snr  
Holger Golinski



*PC Skype link showing images of members participating in the AGM*

## *Thank you lunch for Elizabeth*

After the AGM, a lunch was organised to formally thank Elizabeth Jones for all the hard work over her 15 year reign as President. A set of Stanley Rogers cutlery was presented to her from the ASA. We wish Elizabeth all the best.



*Accordionist Ossie Mazzei celebrates  
'THE BIG 100'*



Many Queenslanders, and accordionists around Australia and indeed the World, will fondly remember Ossie Mazzei. His love of accordion music brought joy to countless lives for over half a century.

On 10<sup>th</sup>. June 2013 this well known and highly respected Ossie was feted by family and friends at a celebration that had him and his beloved accordion music at heart. It was Ossie's birthday, and a very special birthday at that. Ossie had turned the page of his personal score from 99 to an amazing 100 years young.

Guests and accordions came from near and far to join in the party - a great party which was held at the Italo-Australian Club on the Gold Coast.

Ossie arrived in Brisbane in 1930, aged 16, from the island of Elba in Italy's Tuscany region. Initially Ossie worked as a stone mason with his father, while studying piano accordion. He had to leave his button accordion, which had been his passion, behind in Italy.

It wasn't long before he became known as a concert artist and teacher. During World War 2 he performed for fellow Australian Defence Force troops.

On becoming a professional accordionist, Ossie toured Australia. In 1947 he formed his own orchestra - 'Ossie Mazzei and his Accordion Orchestra'; and for 50 years until 1997 entertaining 'Queensland'. For 25 years during this period he also ran the Ossie Mazzei Accordion Centre, a teaching studio on Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane.

In 1996, when he was 83, Ossie and his Orchestra, which included his son Leo, travelled internationally. They played in several European countries receiving standing ovations wherever they performed.

Ossie, with accordion music forever noted within him, has lived on the Gold Coast for nine years. His wife Rose and daughter Paulette have both passed away, but son Leo is still with him. Leo and other family members and friends made sure Ossie's 100<sup>th</sup>. Birthday celebration was a very special one. A very special occasion for a very special man.



Ossies son Leo is seated to his left

## *NEWS FROM VICTORIA*

### *The Big Squeeze Band Keeps Squeezing On!!!*

I am sure that many of you have heard on the “grape vine” that there were changes with the Big Squeeze Band at the end of 2012.

After many years conducting and playing with the orchestra, the “Kalkbrenners” have moved on, with John Senior, John Junior and Terezia farewelling the band after the Christmas concert at the Austrian Club.

We thank all three of them for all their experience and drive and the legacy they leave us.

Excitingly, this means is that there are now places available in the orchestra for new musicians to fill!! We have already welcomed one new member and she is working hard to pick up the pieces in our ever-growing repertoire.

We have performances in the diary for the 26th October at the Surrey Hills Music Festival and our regular annual gig at the very popular Whittlesea Show on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Then Christmas will almost be upon us when we will play at the ASA Concert at the Austrian Club.

The band practises every week on a Tuesday night from 7.30 until 9.30pm at Templestowe Valley Primary School, 15 Birchwood Avenue, Lower Templestowe. We welcome new players – at any level – to join us and to bring music along that we can all enjoy playing together!!

Should you like to come along please contact Holger Golinski on 0422289634 or Suzanne Napolitano on 0425709951 or email us on [goog42@yahoo.com](mailto:goog42@yahoo.com). Everyone is most welcome.

Watch this space next month for details of our upcoming performances. In the meantime – Happy Squeezing!!

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### *Melbourne Orchestra Outings*

The good news about the accordion and it's beautiful sound is gaining a good foothold amongst ethnic communities around Melbourne but also with the general Australian population and the Melbourne Accordion Orchestra is in demand at various Festivals and receiving generous applause when we play.

On Sunday 18th of August the Association of Ukrainians in Victoria held their annual National Day celebration in Federation Square Melbourne and presented in the BMW Edge Theatre a varied program of singing, dancing,

solos and group performances. We combined with the Men's choir to perform The Pniro Song by Platon Mailboroda (refer YouTube link below) The orchestra remained on stage to perform the Western Ukrainian Dance and the Spring Dance by A.Chmykov, followed by the Abba medley during which the Essendon Ukrainian choir joined in to sing some of the vocals all to the enthusiastic applause of the packed hall.

Our next gig was some 25kms.out of Melbourne into the beautiful hills to perform at the Wattle Hurstbridge Festival on Sunday 26th August. This is a small rural suburban community and amongst the various attractions that day the one that fascinated me was the collection of some fifty fully restored vintage cars that were lined up in front of the railway station. We gathered in the town square hoping the rain would stay away and played Libertango, Hotel California, Under Paris Skies, Carnival de Paris and finishing off with the ABBA medley. We couldn't entice anyone to buy our CD's but the organisers were very pleased with our performance and indicated that we would be invited to play again next years.

### *Lee Puccini*

*YouTube link, Combined men's choirs Accordion Orchestra performing at Federation Square,*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z41HJHHgc0g&feature=youtu.be>

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### *Melbourne Orchestra plays at Solstice Celebrations*

Sydney Road Brunswick in suburban Melbourne is a very busy road, famous for Italian wine and grocery shops, cheese shops, furniture shops such as Franco Cozzo's, and also where you will find excellent Turkish restaurants, but as Brunswick changes to Coburg, there is every type of cuisine and product imaginable, if you can't find it there, it doesn't exist.

For transport to this area, one takes a tram from the city which takes you the entire length of Sydney Road.

Amongst all this there is Bar Oussou at 653 Sydney Rd, run by a french speaking Senegalise couple and they were having a musical evening as is the custom in France to celebrate the longest day of the year, solstice. For us it is the opposite, we were asked if we wanted to be part of the musical evening, a free "gig", but it sounded fun, so we agreed.

There were several groups performing, singing their compositions with their instruments, whilst simple low cost meals were served. The bar is licensed, so it was packed.

Only eight of us could fit on the tiny stage space, but most of the other members came along to listen, enjoy the experience and cheer us along. We played our favourites, Libertango, Carnival de Paris, Under Paris Skies, Hotel California and our ABBA medley. Some of the clientele kept chatting, others stood up and came close to hear and at the end, insisted on an encore, so we played Swinging Safari. What a night. No one felt the cold ! No one went home thirsty !

*Lee Puccini*



## *Musical Jam Session*

A few months ago I went to a musical evening in an old church in Nar nar goon where the pews were formed in circle and every one in turn played their particular piece whether it was singing ,flute, guitar, banjo, bush ditties, etc I even played a couple of tunes on my accordion the hours flew away, home again 1 am.

I mentioned this to one of our orchestra member Philip Naughton who said we do something similar with poetry in a scout hall in North Kew.

So I went along and sat in a semi circle in front of an open fire, each one in turn to recite their poetry So I made enquiries about this hall with the result that we have booked the venue for the next 3 months on a trial basis. The ASA VIC has footed this bill with the understanding that it is to be repaid by the donations collected and anything left over will go towards the next 3 months

I would also like to mention that Elizabeth Piesle started a simular idea 4 or 5 years ago in Boronia but due to work commitment, distance etc, it faded away

So the day arrived with a good turn out 15 participants, we sat in a nice circle and each person played one piece then we had another round and at the end we played a simple song (A day in the life o a fool ) with Palmi doing a lovely intro to the song.

Than we had a coffee break and collected a donation of \$60 towards the cost of the hall which is \$40 for 3 hours. At the end of 3 months the balance after the \$120 will go towards the next 3 months.

We also had a visitor from Sydney, Peter Lin to show us his brand new Roland accordion and playing some very nice classical pieces and by all accounts every body enjoyed themselves and are looking forwards to the next gig.

### *Frank Berens*

*Refer next page for dates of future Jam Sessions where everyone is welcome.*



## Upcoming Performances (Victoria) for your diary

Date: **October 13th at 2pm**  
Artists: John and Terezia Kalkbrenner on Piano Accordion and Organ  
Where: Polish Sports Recreation Centre  
19 Carrington Drive  
Albion. Mel Ref 26 C9

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Date: **October 25th at 1.30pm**  
Artists: John and Terezia Kalkbrenner  
Where: Dometown Organ Club  
Nunawading Senior Citizens Centre  
Silver Grove  
Nunawading. Mel Ref 48 E9

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Date: **October 26th at 12:30pm**  
Artists: Big Squeeze Bank  
Where: Surrey Hills Festival  
Trinity Hall (opposite Train station)

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Date: **November 3rd**  
Artists: Terezia Kalkbrenner with the Choir  
Where: Coburg Town Hall  
Coburg. Mel Ref 7 J12

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Date: **November 3rd at 10.30am**  
Artists: Big Squeeze Bank  
Where: Whittlesea Show

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Date: **November 12th from 2pm—5pm**  
**December 15th from 2pm—5pm**  
Artists: Jam Session—open to all willing and able, please come along  
Where: 1st Kew Scout Hall  
Cnr Kilby & Willsmere St,  
Kew. Mel Ref 45 E2

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## Australian Accordion Teachers Association Inc.

### The Australian Accordion Teachers Association Celebrates 20 YEARS of International Competitions and Festivals

Come – and join the celebration and be a part of our special

## INTERNATIONAL MASSED ORCHESTRA!

You are invited to be a part of this exciting group  
conducted by our Special Guest from New  
Zealand – Lionel Reekie



**When:** Sat/Sun 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Where:** Sydney, Australia

**Requirements:** Register your interest before **1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.** You will be sent your music by email well before the festival.

### **THIS GROUP IS OPEN TO PLAYERS OF ANY LEVEL AND AGE!**



There will be two massed rehearsals over the course of the weekend competition and then a Performance at the AATA's International Gala Concert on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June.

### **START PLANNING TODAY!!!**

For information about the AATA, it's competition or festival please visit:

[www.aata.org.au](http://www.aata.org.au) or email [info@aata.org.au](mailto:info@aata.org.au)

The AATA has held one of Australia's largest Accordion competitions annually for the last 20 years. We encourage all players, and accordion enthusiasts to join us in sharing our love of the accordion. **See you in June 2014.**

## *Queensland Orchestra News*

Queensland Accordion Orchestra is performing quite regularly and doing very well with the CD we made. We were playing as the Queensland Accordion Ensemble when it looked as if the Queensland Accordion Orchestra would have to fold, so we stepped in and it is now flourishing.

Have a look at our website [www.qao.org.au](http://www.qao.org.au) and you will get an idea of what we are up to.

Cheers

*Marie McGuinness*



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## *NSW Orchestra News*

*Throughout the year since Griffith, the Orchestra has become more of an ensemble than an orchestra, but nevertheless has been working tirelessly on numerous projects. Namely the upcoming album.*

*The CD has had 4 of 10 songs edited so far, they then go onto mixing, mastering and ready for release. We are requesting that people start thinking of names for the new album and possible artwork to be completed by Rob Scott-Mitchell.*

*The CD launch is looking to be held at Camelot Lounge in Marrickville. It's an exciting time, as we now look to the future for new members and towards starting some new repertoire.*

*Amelia*

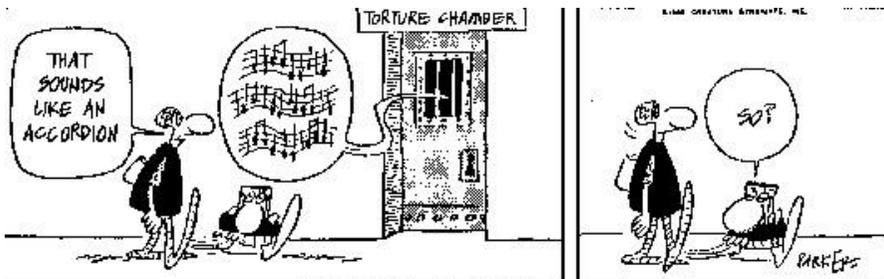
## SNIPPETS, GOSSIP & NEWS

### *Festival of the Sausage*

Last week of August the Griffith Community along with the Griffith Italian Museum organised the Festival of the Sausage. Our good friend and member of the ASA Joe Staltare entertained the crowd. This is a yearly festival and it is great to see Joe so prominent with his accordion.



### *Wizard of Id*



## *It's never too late to start playing!*

*Here's Sven, 100 years old!  
He started playing when he was 91.  
Unfortunately, he's no longer among  
us. He used to play diatonics (durspel)  
and harmonicas. He was having hard  
time selecting instrument when the  
key was changed. He was the only one  
not playing a chromatic accordion in  
the Accordion club.*



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## *Celebrity Accordionists!*



*Jimmy Stewart*



*Fred Astaire*



*Connie Francis*

Photos of celebrities playing the accordion keep pouring in since we published The Beatles, Elvis & John Lennon in previous editions, (good to see members are reading the Review)! Too many photos to publish so here are three more stars.

Thanks to all members who sent in photos.

## *Mathilde holidaying in Australia*

While on a 3 week summer holiday from university in France, Mathilde Aroux returned to Sydney to visit her family and friends and made time to join the NSW orchestra on their Monday night practice at Glebe. It was great to see her and hear the wonderful French style music she is mastering.

Mathilde is studying Accordion at the Centre National et International de Musique et d'Accordéon in Saint Sauves d'Auvergne and has just completed year one of a three year degree. Good luck with your studies and we look forward to catching up on your next summer break.



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## *All in the 'ASA' family*

*On Saturday the 17th of August former member of the ASA orchestra Josephine Tavernese, sister of Chris Tavernese and cousin to Amelia and Dominique Granturco married Christopher El-Daher who also happens to be the cousin of Jedda Kassis and the nephew of the society's co-acting president Denise Kassis. A truly ASA wedding!*

*The wedding was held at St. Brigid's Church in Marrickville, with many guests in attendance.*

*Photos of the bridesmaids: Amelia Granturco, Dominique Granturco and Nadia Kassis (sister of Jedda). And a photo of the happy couple.*

*We congratulate them and wish them a lifetime of happiness, filled with accordion music!*



## *To Accordion Lovers*

After uploading my 1<sup>st</sup> You Tube Video, I have been requested to write a article.

Piano Accordion is my life, work, and play. Playing Folk Music from Italy, France, Ireland and Australia, I strive to demonstrate what a beautiful expressive instrument the accordion is. I have been blessed to be employed playing soulful Traditional Klezmer pieces to the joyful Irish Jigs.



Originally from Christchurch Bill & Meg Fidler are responsible for cultivating my love of the accordion. Practical lessons from Bill, joyous, expressive, musical sessions, followed by Theory with Meg, cups of tea and gingernuts till late on Monday Nights.

In the 70's Australian Bush Band, Red Ned, played Sydney Opera House and Martin Plaza, supported the BushWackers in Queensland. Sue Haselden Band won the big Tamworth Country Festival Talent Quest. Major Festivals and Venues followed through the years. Always based on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. This year has seen Gala Dinners in Macau, New York and London promoting the building of The Luxury Liner "Titanic 11" in China.

Heaps is happening as well as a few tracks down on my next CD. All the news in links, as follows.

<http://robertgrantaccordion.com.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Robert-Grant-My-Accordion-World/186240594760188>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Erix-yi5NM>

Hope you enjoy my music. Please click and share.

***Bob*** (*Grant*)

## *Hello from Bernadette Conlon in USA*

It has been many years since I have attended an Accordion Society event, especially since I have been living in the United States for the past six and a half years. I enjoyed very much attending functions in Melbourne and the national festivals throughout the nineties. Some of you may remember me from there, as well as some of the concerts and busking I did in Melbourne - and you might still find my name on a couple of national ASA trophies from the festivals I so enjoyed.

That was when I was Bernadette Conlon. I'm now married to a wonderful man, Ed Zabawa and I have just welcomed my first and very adorable daughter, Anastasia Marie into the world this year on May 2nd. I've been married now for over six years, since my move to the States.



I kept my accordion playing up, although there were not many venues in Rockford, where I live, which is about 90 miles out of Chicago. And since my pregnancy, in particular, I have not touched the accordion, because it was not an easy pregnancy and it took me a long time to recover after a 31 hour labour with some minor complications. However, my lovely little girl and I are now very healthy and I'm enjoying the new challenges that motherhood brings, as well as the absolute joy it brings.

Eric Robinson visited me last year in June, which was lovely. Actually, I had not seen anyone from Australia until I saw Eric and Carol. Eric has been after me to write an article for the *Accordion Review*, and here it is. I am thrilled that the accordion is still alive in Australia and that there are now two thriving orchestras in Melbourne, one of which I actually founded. I'm so proud that it is still going so strongly. I do not see a need for political differences, however I love to see a healthy accordion scene in Australia and I do miss being a part of it, even though I have a very full and hectic life here, especially after the arrival of my beautiful daughter.

My email address is:

[bernadette.zabawa@hotmail.com](mailto:bernadette.zabawa@hotmail.com) and I would love to hear from anyone who wishes to stay in contact. I wish you all the best.



*Bernadette*

# NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND

## 2013 COUPE MONDIALE CANADA

Contributed by Sonja Palinich



The 66<sup>th</sup> CIA Coupe Mondiale, World Accordion championships were held this year in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada from 17<sup>th</sup> August to 24<sup>th</sup> August hosted by the BC Accordion Society. The championships and festival ran for a full week which was a bit longer than usual.

For the opening of the event, an accordion parade was held in downtown Victoria. Accordionists from all around the world joined in the fun by marching and playing down the main streets of the city. On my drive to the hotel, the taxi driver enthusiastically told me all about the parade and I also heard a local radio broadcaster talking about it.

At the 130<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the New Zealand Accordion Association had four delegates present being myself, Harley Jones (who also serves as the CIA Public Relations Manager), Lionel Reekie and Carol Yan. Carol is an ex NZAA Committee member and Treasurer who now resides in Vancouver. Other Kiwi delegates present but representing other countries were Kevin Friedrich for the USA who also serves as the CIA Ambassador and ex NZAA Committee member, Alison Worthington for the United Kingdom.

The World Accordion Orchestra VII was performed earlier in the week which was a change from previous years when the Orchestra has usually performed at the conclusion of the event. The Orchestra performed two pieces conducted respectively by Maureen Jarosh from Canada and Joan Cochran Sommers from the USA. Guest artist, Lionel Reekie sang "Bring him Home" from *Les Miserables* with the Orchestra which was a resounding hit with the audience. The Orchestra and Lionel received a standing ovation. Carol Yan and I played in the orchestra.

New Zealand had one competitor this year, Alexandra Reekie. Alexandra was a contestant in the Junior Virtuoso Entertainment category for under 18 year olds. Her programme consisted of two rounds of music played over two days. Alexandra did a magnificent job and performed to a standard we can all be proud of. She placed 10<sup>th</sup> in this category. A fine achievement for someone so young at only 12 years of age and bearing in mind that most

of her competitors were aged between 16-18 years of age.

All championship categories and evening concerts were held at the one venue being the Victoria Conservatory of Music which was very handy to where we were all staying. We were treated all week to an array of diverse accordion entertainment and activities with exciting international accordion acts and workshops. Free midday concerts were held every day in the town square. These were all very well attended by accordionists and the general public.

It was great to have a strong Kiwi contingent at the championships. In addition to the names mentioned above, also in attendance were Elena and Alina Reekie, Amy Jennings and her partner Llewe Jones. I also met a Kiwi

lady in the World Accordion Orchestra who had been living in Canada for the last 20 years. She had never heard of the NZAA. She joined us in the official Team Kiwi photo.

Music aside, of course there were other things to do in Victoria. When not in the concert hall, many of us took the opportunity to explore the city and do some sight-seeing such as the world famous Butchart gardens and whale watching. Victoria is a beautiful harbour city full of manicured gardens. The British colonial influence is very evident in the city's architecture especially in the impressive Parliament building. An excellent setting for a memorable event and trip.

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### *AAA Competitions in NEW YORK*

*contributed by Lionel Reekie*

The American Accordionists Association (AAA) celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a wonderful festival held from 14<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> August at the New Yorker Hotel in the heart of Manhattan. Attracting accordionists from all over the world, the festival featured workshops, concerts, competitions and exhibits showcasing all aspects of the accordion.

The New Zealand Accordion Association was represented at the event by President Sonja Palinich, with Lionel Reekie performing as a guest artist and his daughter, Alexandra competing in US championships.

Lionel provided a bracket on the "International Concert" - so called as it featured performers from all over the world. Opening with the Musikforum Olching accordion orchestra from Germany, and also featuring Mirco Patarini (Italy), Cathy Travers (Australia), Gamle Aker Spelemannslag (Norway) and Maricarmen Vazquez accordionist with violinist Gerardo Aguillon (Cuba) the capacity audience was treated to every style of music .

This concert was compared by NZ's own Kevin Friedrich (who is also an AAA board member.)

Other concerts during the festival showcased well known international performers such as Dr William Schimmel, and culminating with Russian, Alexander Poeluev (who many New Zealanders will remember from his visits to the NZAA festivals) as the headline soloist for the Gala Concert.

In celebrating the 75 year history of the AAA, the "founders" were given special recognition through several of the workshops outlining their history and contribution to the accordion. In the competition categories, the "Founders Solo" (where contestants had to perform a work by either Mag-nante, Biviano, Deiro, Von Hallberg, Gart. Frosini, Galla-Rini or Nunzio) also honoured these individuals. Alexandra entered the Junior division and won the cash prize for her rendition of "Hot Points".

The accordion competition categories at the AAA events are a little unusual for those of us used to New Zealand competitions. The contest is held in the hotel conference rooms, with the judge at the front of the room at a table facing the audience. The contestant then sits with their back to the audience to give the performance. Alexandra competed in three other categories, Junior Ethnic, and Junior Open Solo (winning 1<sup>st</sup> place in both) and achieving a 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Intermediate Original Accordion Composition category.

A highlight of the festival were the three massed accordion orchestras. Alexandra took the opportunity to play in the Junior Festival Orchestra conducted by Mary Tokarski. This was a wonderful opportunity for her to make new friends, and in concert the group received an enthusiastic reception from the audience. The festival massed band performed "New York, New York" at the Bryant Park Fountain Terrace, in front of a large audience included a number of television cameras that were there to capture the accordion action. In the audience was past Air New Zealand Accordion Orchestra member, Lucinda McGovern (nee Allen) who was living in New York at the time. Bryant Park had featured accordion entertainment throughout the month, and Lionel was asked to give a 40 minute show on the South Plaza,

The closing banquet of the festival opened with a performance of the main festival orchestra in the spectacular NY Hotel Ballroom, jointly conducted by AAA president Linda Soley-Reed and Joan Cochran-Sommers. The programme included Pietros Return March, Paul Creston's Fantasy (with Mary Tokarski as accordion soloist) and the Les Miserables medley with Lionel as tenor soloist. The American Accordionists Association continues to actively promote the accordion in the United States and will be holding their 2014 Festival in Tarrytown NY.

## *ALANAH JONES AT AATA*

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July I flew to Sydney with my Auntie Heather, Dad Maurice and Uncle Harley. It was my Birthday – 10 years old WAHOO! We trained into Central Sydney and we walked to the famous department store David Jones. Heather asked the pianist to play me Happy Birthday. We then wandered about shopping in Pitt St Mall before training out to Canley Vale, counting all of the stations.

We were staying at an Ibis Hotel out west Sydney. On Saturday we went early to the Australian Accordion Teachers Association Competitions, held in small hall without stage. I played my Free Bass piece in the morning and won the class. All of the International Competitions were in the afternoon. Contestants were from Australia, NZ, China and Serbia. I had 4 contestants in the 12 and under Australasian Championship Class, they were from Adelaide and 2 from Sydney. I was the only one to play from memory and I was really excited when I won.

We went to dinner with my new friend from Adelaide Emma Smith and President Tania Lukic Marx at a Chinese restaurant, we ate crab – I was the best with the chop sticks. On Sunday morning went to the Cabramatta, a Vietnamese suburb to shop. The Prize giving concert was held at the Bonnyrigg Sports Club. As a prize winner I played Cubanola. After the concert we had a Serbian Dinner followed by lots of Kola dancing.



On Monday morning after managing to squeeze all of our stuff into the hire Corolla we drove into Bondi Beach and I swam for about 30mins before having fish and chips at a restaurant on the beach. Off to the airport, only getting lost once.

*Alanah*

## *PUHOI CELEBRATES 150 YEARS*

*Contributed by Heather Masfield*

150 years ago a boatload of settlers from Bohemia who had spent 4 months without making landfall were dropped off at midnight (because of the tides) at what has become the settlement of Puhoi. They had nothing, most importantly no food, and the local Maoris took pity on them and helped them through the winter until they could grow food. The hard working immigrants cleared the land of scrub and huge kauris and created gardens and pasture, built the church, school house, library and museum, which all still stand today. Significantly they brought their music with them and accordion was a mainstay of this. A display of the early instruments resides in a kauri display case at the Dargaville museum

The celebrations started on Friday evening at the Pub and continued at the church the next morning. Many people dressed in period costume. On Sunday at the Puhoi Market Heather Gladstone and Roger Buckton, who had come from Christchurch to perform on accordion and dudlesac as 'Folkworks' from 9am to 11am. They were followed by the Ohaupo Bohemian Band from 11am, who had two accordionists play. Half a dozen NZAA members went along, even at that early hour, to see them perform.



## SAPACS

The 2013 South Auckland Performing Arts Competitions were held on the first weekend of August at the Hawkins Theatre in Papakura. The festival location change in recent years has been a good one for many performers, as the old location of Pukekohe Town Hall was drafty and with poorer acoustics. The Hawkins Theatre seats around 300 and is fully equipped for all types of stage performances. My accordion group consisting of Andrew McFall, Ellie Archer, Bradley Williams and Daniel Robinson performed in the instrumental small ensemble section on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. We competed for the Davy McKee Challenge Shield for a classical performance, and the Papakura Music School Trophy for a contemporary performance, both awards which we have won in the past. Our classical song was Donna Diana, the first song we learned after the Coupe Mondiale in Auckland 2009. In this category, we were awarded a blue ribbon, with first prize going to an impressive all female string group called Quartet de Vita. Our contemporary song called Impact was composed by a fellow member of Noteable Soundz, Daniel Robinson. This was our first public performance of the piece, and it achieved first place and the Papakura Music School Trophy. Former Noteable Soundz member Martin Meyer was also awarded a prize in the same ceremony, with him and Joshua Helm winning the Instrumental Duet KBB Music Trophy, playing piano accordion and cello respectively. It is even more commendable that the pair were defending champions of the award. The annual SAPACS competitions are a local event that we always find enjoyable. The two songs we played have both been recently recorded for our CD, and playing for a large audience adds another dimension of performance which ultimately makes us better musicians. The evening of competitions was topped off with the traditional multi family trip to a fancy pizzeria.



L-R: Bradley Williams, Andrew McFall, Lorraine Parnell, Daniel Robinson, Ellie Archer, Tamba Young

## NZAA – PRESIDENT’S REPORT 2013

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2013 annual president’s report. Our newsletters, website and facebook page have detailed the numerous individual and group performances and other achievements of many of our students and talented professional accordionists both in New Zealand and overseas. I thank you all for the huge contribution you have all made in maintaining and highlighting the versatility of our instrument. Following is a summary of significant accordion activities during the past year.

In July 2012, the Canterbury Accordion Association celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. A contingent of supporters and players from Auckland went down to Christchurch to join in the celebrations. The New Zealand Youth Orchestra performed conducted by Christine Johnstone. This orchestra consisted of players from Auckland and Christchurch under the age of 18 years. Both the Christchurch Accordion Orchestra and the Canterbury Accordion Association Reunion Orchestra performed. We congratulate President Lynette Kelcher and her team on reaching this milestone.

In August 2012, the 65<sup>th</sup> Coupe Mondiale Championships were held in the picturesque Italian town of Spoleto in Umbria. The official New Zealand delegation consisted of myself, Grayson Masefield, Heather Masefield and Maurice Jones. Sitting on the CIA Executive were Harley Jones as public relations manager and Kevin Friedrich as CIA ambassador. Alison Worthington attended as a delegate for the United Kingdom. We did not have any competitors representing New Zealand this year but we definitely had a presence in running the event. Kevin Friedrich, Heather Masefield and Alison Worthington all worked as category managers. Grayson Masefield worked as an adjudicator and also sat on the Music Committee.

The championships and concerts were staged in the magnificent 19<sup>th</sup> century opera house - *Teatro Nuovo* with its ornate box seats. A number of us performed in the World Accordion Orchestra VI being myself, Kevin Friedrich, Harley Jones, Grayson Masefield and Heather Masefield. Just before the orchestra was due to perform, Harley Jones was awarded the Paolo Soprani award. This prestigious award was awarded to Harley in recognition of his work promoting the accordion via the internet. We congratulate him on this achievement.

In October, I together with Maurice Jones and Heather Masefield attended the 2012 Benny Awards dinner in Auckland. These awards hosted by the Variety Artists Club are the highest awards given to entertainers across all genres in New Zealand. Lionel Reekie was nominated for the top musician award. We congratulate him on his nomination. During the course of the evening, tributes were made to the late Toni Savage and the late Silvio de Pra.

In November, Eddie Giffney performed with the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra at the Trusts Stadium in Waitakere premiering his own arrangement of Vivaldi’s *Violin Concerto in G minor – 3<sup>rd</sup> movement* arranged for accordion and

string orchestra together with performing Gary Daverne's arrangement of *Oblivion*. This was part of the "Meet the Instruments" section of the event which was very well received by the audience. Stephanie Poole performed with the Auckland Symphony Orchestra in a community concert at the Auckland Town Hall. She played the solo accordion part in *Musical Party for Solo Accordion* which was composed and conducted by Gary Daverne. This work was premiered at this concert and repeated a week later at a concert at the Bruce Mason Centre.

Grayson Masefield performed solo accordion in *Picasso's Guernica* by Gorka Hermosa with the Spokane Symphony Orchestra at the Confédération Mondiale de l'accordéon (CMA) Trophée Mondiale in Spokane, Washington, USA in October. During the year, Grayson adjudicated at all of the international competitions he has won being CIA, CMA, Roland and Sata Hame Soi respectively. He also performed in Finland, France, Italy, Austria, Bosnia, Belgium, USA, Chile, Switzerland and China.

In March 2013, Kevin Friedrich realised his dream of producing the world's first Kauri accordion when a joint project between New Zealand and Finland produced an instrument combining a Finnish folk accordion culture instrument with the magnificent and ancient Kauri tree of New Zealand. An unveiling of this instrument took place on 24 March at a sold out concert at the Lighthouse function centre in Dargaville. The annual fundraising concert featured Kevin with the assistance of his many local musician friends together with vocalist and accordionist Lionel Reekie. The beautiful two row Kauri instrument is rich in its sonority and showcases the gorgeous blonde and precious Kauri wood. It certainly wowed the audience and will now be proudly featured as the entrance exhibit at the Dargaville Museum which also houses the rare and permanent *Accordion Gems* exhibition.

World Accordion day was again celebrated on 6 May. As New Zealand is the first country in the world to see the sun, we were the first country to kick off the celebration. A live interview was held with organisers Frederic Deschamps and Grayson Masefield in France together with showing highlights of our accordion activities during the year. Our annual championships and festival were held on Queens Birthday weekend. The farewell concert featured prize winners and the newly formed Auckland Accordion Symphonietta with their conductor Lionel Reekie. We also had a memorable performance from Noteable Sounz from South Auckland. Christine Johnstone was awarded a well-deserved Life Membership.

The weekend was perfectly capped off with a dinner at Aubergine Restaurant in Takapuna. We thank our wonderful accordion entertainers Stephen Cope, Heather Gladstone, Maurice Jones and Lionel Reekie for entertaining us that night.

With technology, we are all linked more closely with what is happening globally on the international accordion scene and we do have a real presence on this scene. I consider this has a real positive effect on us to keep raising the profile of the accordion in New Zealand and to stay inspired. I take this opportunity to thank all members and other supporters who have contributed in whatever way to promote the accordion in this country.

**Sonja Palinich President**

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