

HSGA QUARTERLY

Published four times a year in Honolulu, Hawai'i
by the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association

Volume 26, Issue 101

Winter 2010-11



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A casual "back porch" shot of dobro and steel guitar performer, Dave Giegerich, founder of the award-winning Washington, D.C. area band, *The Hula Monsters*.

Aloha A Hui Hou, E Dave Giegerich

"Closing Notes" stories rarely find their way to our front cover. The outpouring of reactions to member Dave Giegerich's untimely passing—from HSGAers and noted musicians in the Washington, D.C. area and beyond—is something we rarely see. Dave was an HSGA member for most of the last ten years and made memorable appearances at our Joliet 2005 and 2007 conventions. What follows is a tribute to Dave that appeared in the Ellicott City Patch and some remembrances from HSGA members.

Dave Giegerich, a revered dobro and steel guitar player and beloved local musician [in the Washington D.C. area], died on Wednesday, December

29, 2010 from complications connected to aplastic anemia. He had successfully beaten neck cancer in 2007 but the blood disease was discovered a year later. Dave was 57. He lived in Ellicott City, Maryland and worked at the University of Maryland at the Baltimore School of Social Work.

Dave was a giant in the D.C. music scene, and he was loved for his wit, intelligence, easygoing and accepting manner, and generous heart. His main instrument was the dobro or resophonic guitar, but he also excelled at pedal steel, lap steel, electric mandolin, and, as he used to say, "other pieces of wood with strings." In 1988, Dave founded

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HSGA QUARTERLY

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association is a tax-exempt, nonprofit educational corporation in the State of Hawai'i under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our primary purpose is to develop a global network of players and lovers of traditional Hawaiian music and to encourage the study, teaching, and performance of the Hawaiian steel guitar. Our primary financial goal is to provide scholarship assistance through donations to steel guitar students who demonstrate the ability and intent to become accomplished performers.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all steel guitar players and non-players around the world who support the perpetuation of the Hawaiian steel guitar. Annual dues are US\$30. The membership year begins July 1. Members receive the *HSGA Quarterly* and other group benefits. The *Quarterly* is mailed four times a year First Class to addresses in the United States and by Air Mail to foreign addresses. Members can obtain an Associate Membership for a spouse or family member at a cost of \$10, added to the annual dues; an Associate Member is entitled to discounts at certain HSGA functions and can vote in HSGA Board elections.

SUBMIT LETTERS & EDITORIALS TO:

HSGA Quarterly, 2434 Waioma'o Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424 USA. Our e-mail address is hsga@hsga.org. Articles and photos should also be e-mailed directly to the newsletter editor at johnely@hawaiiansteel.com.

DAVE GIEGERICH *Cont. from Page 1*

the multiple Wammie award-winning band The Hula Monsters, which covered many styles including swing, country, jazz standards and Hawaiian tunes [ED: 'Wammies' are awards given by the Washington Area Music Association]. He also performed and recorded with many bands and artists including Bill Harrell and the Virginians, Bill Kirchen, Eva Cassidy, and Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer. He was a bandleader but he was also the quintessential sideman, tastefully accompanying other musicians, but absolutely taking the stage during his solos.

Dave was born on March 15, 1953, in Chicago, Illinois and moved with his family to South Haven, Michigan in 1962. He came from a musical family and started playing guitar in the early 1970s. A year or two later, he made his first slide guitar by sticking a pencil between his guitar's nut and its strings. Dave went to Michigan State University for a few years before dropping out because of music (he went back to

school later to get his bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus).

In the late 1970s, Dave moved to Fredericksburg, Virginia where his brother Steve was a reporter. Steve, who was Dave's bone marrow and blood donor, said, "He immediately became immersed in the bluegrass scene. I was a reporter writing high profile stories and a column, but within six months I became [more known as] Dave Giegerich's brother." Dave met his wife Pam in Fredericksburg and they lived in Chapel Hill, N. Carolina and Florida before moving to the D.C. area in the early '80s.

With two children, Dave was a stay-at-home dad, and he spent every free minute practicing. His brother said, "He would play gigs at night and he would practice hours a day. That was his whole life; you never saw Dave without a guitar or dobro in his hand. That was the background music to his life, literally, and he got better and better. He got to the point where everyone knew him and he was giving lessons

Roping the guys in for a mall photo shoot, Mom gets more than she bargained for! Dave Giegerich (center) with wife Pam and sons Axel (far right) and Carter.





Performing with the Hula Honeys on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center last August. Pam thinks it was his last gig since it was the weekend before he went in for the transplant.

and playing with everyone in town. He lived to play music and he played music until the very end. He and his son Carter were jamming on Christmas day.”

Hula Monsters band mate Mark Noone met Dave in the late 1980s, and in 1991 started playing with him in the country band Out Behind the Barn. He said, “He was the funniest guy I ever played with. And he was amazing in that every time I played with him he was a little bit better than the last time. That’s all he wanted to do—was play. We’d be on the road in some hotel, and he’d get out his dobro and tell me to get out my guitar and play. He was a true musician in every sense of the word, and then some. For him it was all about music and playing.” Mark said that a few months ago, when Dave was in the hospital, “I told him, you have a lot of people who love you and are worried about you and he said, ‘I don’t want anyone to worry about me—I’ve had a great life and look what I got to do—I got to play music with my friends and my heroes.’ He was very comfortable with himself and very happy with what he had.”

Guitarist, singer and songwriter Bill Kirchen, who knew Dave for close to 20 years, said, “I lost my wonderful pal Dave and it has caused me to double my resolve to cherish the living. He was a great combination of one of my favorite guys to see, to talk to, and he was just a fantastic player. I used to marvel at how he got that good. And he was real supportive of other people’s playing. We did 13 years of Hank Williams tribute shows at the Birchmere, and we were expecting him to make [this] the 14th.

Hula Monsters band mate Moe Nelson said, “Dave would surely have a dry one-liner to capture what we cannot say. He fought the good fight, and I really thought he would pull

through this, especially with the incredible support from family and friends. But, the human body is as fragile as the human spirit is resilient. Mahalo nui loa and Aloha ‘oe, Dave.”

Asked why Dave started the Hula Monsters, his brother said, “He thought that Hawaiian music was the purest form of music. One time we were on a long car trip and he had this Hawaiian music in the car, and that’s when he said Hawaiian music was the purest form of music. I said, ‘Are you telling me that this is purer than Bach or other classical composers?’ And he said, ‘Yeah, they had outside influences, but how could you influence anyone who lived on an island?’ And I had to agree.”

Dave’s family held a celebration of Dave’s life and music on January 15 at the Maryland State Boychoir Center followed by a huge jam session. Gerald Ross was there and estimated that around 400 people were there. Dobro great Mike Auldridge played a solo piece during the ceremony.

Dave is survived by his wife Pam and two children, Axel (22) and Carter (20); his father, Raymond Giegerich of South Haven, Michigan; and two brothers and a sister.

From HSGA Members

Gerald Ross: “Dave and I first met when we were in our young twenties. We worked together at Elderly Instruments in East Lansing, Michigan and played in the same bluegrass band. He was an amazing musician at age 24 and only got better as the years passed. He was a very funny, sharp, witty, worldly guy. We hit it off from the start. He loved his friends and family and loved playing all types of music.”

Rick Aiello: “He was *The Hula Monster*, pound for pound the greatest steel player I ever met. I’ll never forget his first appearance in Joliet. He was scheduled to close the Saturday afternoon session. Gerald had known him for some 20 years and I had seen him play a few times, so we knew what was about to happen. But to everyone else he was an “unknown.” I remember sitting there and watching all the attendees jaws drop when he launched into his set. He ended with “Take Me Out to the Ballgame,” and that performance is etched into my mind! I’ll miss you, my friend.”

Don “Kona” Woods: “This was terrible news. He was such a young man. I enjoyed his appearances at Joliet. He was a master of the steel guitar. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family.”

Dave Kolars: “I first met Dave around 1995. I’d heard him play resophonic on a Bill Harrell tape. We corresponded off and on for a couple of years, and then I finally got to meet and play with him at Joliet. Jeff Au Hoy was the featured artist. Jeff, Gerald, Dave and I got into a killer jam that lasted a few hours. We did a lot of bluegrass, swing, and anything else we could think of! So sorry to hear of his passing. I’ll miss him and his phenomenal musicianship. And wonderfulness. ■

Honolulu 2011 Preview

From Kamaka Tom

We're all set for the HSGA Honolulu 2011 Convention! The dates are Wednesday, April 27 through Friday, April 29, and we have reserved the Peacock Room of the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel for HSGA daytime activities. If you've never been to Hawai'i, I can tell you it's the experience of a lifetime with plenty of time to catch Hawaiian steel guitar playing around Waikiki and see the sights around O'ahu.

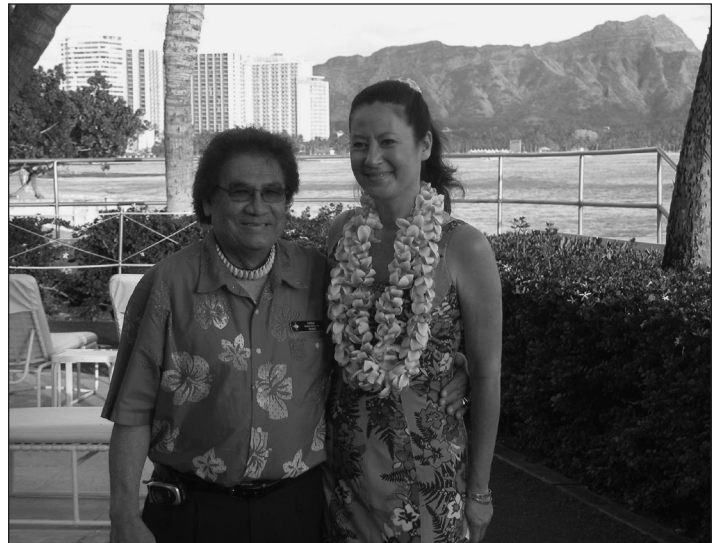
The Peacock Room has been renovated with new carpet and a large window with a Diamond Head view on the east side where the sun comes up in the morning. The bar on the outside of the Peacock Room also is newly renovated, facing the swimming pool area. Much renovation is going on now at the hotel and will be continuing in April during the course of the convention.

Registering for the convention is a two-step process: registering with the hotel and registering with HSGA for the convention. Please complete and mail out the hotel form and the convention form included with your newsletter along with proper payment as soon as possible. Important: *Members are responsible for booking their own rooms, and the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel does not handle convention registration.* We recommend that you secure your hotel reservation with a credit card by calling the hotel directly. Note: All late-breaking information regarding Honolulu 2011 will be posted on our website.

Hotel Reservations

The Queen Kapi'olani Hotel is offering rooms at a special rate for HSGAers from April 20 through May 6. A credit card is required to secure your reservation. To make your

Bobby Ingano playing his Bakelite Rick at the 2005 Ho'olaule'a.



Duke Kaleolani Ching and former Miss Hawai'i Kanoe Miller in a picture perfect pose with Diamond Head in the background.

reservation, complete and send in the hotel form with your credit card information or, better yet, call the reservations agent at 800-367-2317 (toll-free) or 808-922-4671 (local Hawai'i number). *When calling for your reservation be sure to give the agent our group booking code 'HSGA' to get the group rate. Reserve now! After March 27, rooms are not guaranteed to be available.*

Room Rates

The following rates are for a single or double room for up to four persons: City view rooms are available at \$85; Diamond Head view rooms, \$95; and Ocean view rooms, \$110. Add around 14 percent in local taxes to these prices. The front desk staff will try their best to meet your request for a specific room or bedding type, subject to availability. Don't delay! If you have questions, contact hotel representative Merl Bautista at the numbers given above or send her an e-mail at reservations@queenkapiolani.com.

Convention Registration

In addition to your hotel reservation, you need to complete the convention registration form provided in the newsletter insert and mail it to the Honolulu address given on the form. Please get it to us by March 15. The convention fee is \$120 per person, which includes an American or Hawaiian lunch buffet each day of the convention and covers some of our costs. The fee for children, ages 5-10, is \$60. The registration fee does *not* cover the cost of your hotel room and the fee applies even if you decide to take your lunches elsewhere—this is part of our agreement with the hotel and why we're getting the discounted rates.

Please make checks payable in U.S. dollars to 'The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association'. Internet users, you can

now pay your registration fee via PayPal on our website. Very convenient!

If you decide to attend at the last minute or you are coming from overseas and don't want to deal with currency exchange until you arrive, you will be able to pay your convention fee at our Peacock Room reception desk.

Performer Time Slots

If you're planning on performing, complete the bottom part of the convention form and mail it to the address shown on the form ASAP—playing slots are filled on a first come, first served basis. Plan to perform 25 minutes on stage and please bring two sets of chord charts for your backup players.

Planned Off-Site Activities

We are holding our annual concerts at the Waikīkī-Kapahulu Library from 1-3 PM on April 30 and the Annual Lei Day HSGA Concert at Kapi'olani Park on Sunday, May 1 from 10 AM to 3 PM. We will need to schedule performers in advance for both shows—please contact Kamaka Tom at gktom007@yahoo.com or 808-392-4583. You can also check the status of these events on our website (www.hsga.org).

We would also like to do a day trip to the Polynesian Cultural Center on O'ahu's north shore at some point during convention week. Steve Cheney and sons play steel guitar in three separate all-Hawaiian lū'au shows at the center. There is choice of a daytime tour, or lū'au show with dinner followed by a big Polynesian revue in a big amphitheater. Estimated cost, up to \$200 per person for the complete tour-dinner-show package. Standard tours can be arranged through hotel's tour agent. Once the size of the group and date has been determined, I could contact Steve Cheney to make sure his favorite backup musicians are performing. ■

Always a big presence at our Hawai'i conventions, HSGA members and friends from Japan. Shown here, steel guitarist Hideko Kobayashi and band performing on stage at Honolulu 2005.



At Honolulu 2005, Barbara Kuhns on 'ukulele, Wayne Shishido on rhythm, Derrick Mau on steel guitar, and Kamaka Tom on bass.

It's Dues Time Again!

Remember, HSGA's membership year begins on July 1, 2011. Dues are \$30 and all issues go out 'Air Mail' (see insert).

Hawai'i Convention Schedule

Tuesday, April 26

9:00-11:00 AM – Pre-registration near the bar area fronting the Peacock Room in the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel. Recommended! Check in early and avoid the Wednesday registration lines.

Wednesday, April 27 – Friday, April 29

8:15-2:00 – On site registration.

9:00-9:25 – Opening program.

9:30-11:35 – Morning member stage performances.

11:45-12:45 – American or Hawaiian menu buffet luncheon service in the Peacock Room for registered convention guests.

1:00-3:00 – Afternoon member stage performances.

Saturday, April 30

Annual steel guitar concert at the Waikīkī-Kapahulu Public Library, 1-3 PM. The library is three blocks north of the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel. Admission: free.

Sunday, May 1

Annual Lei Day Celebration in Kapi'olani Park. Live music will be provided by HSGA members and friends from 10 AM to 3 PM at the tent and stage area near the winners' display for the Lei-Making Competition. Admission: free.

VINTAGE AXES

By Paul Warnik

Hello friends. My last article was about an instrument that undoubtedly shaped the history of steel guitars and American guitars in general. That instrument was the Rickenbacker Electro Hawaiian (AKA “frypan”), which also debuted as the first electronically amplified stringed instrument to ever go into production. If it had been the only steel guitar made by Rickenbacker, the name would forever carry reverence amongst the musicians who play them. But, while the frypan was Rickenbacker’s premiere Hawaiian steel guitar, we could not pass over the rest of Rickenbacker’s steel guitar line without mentioning the popular Bakelite models.

I’m pretty sure that most of you are familiar with Bakelite plastic, which had been patented years earlier. Because of its excellent insulating qualities it was used for handles on toasters, waffle irons, and other cookware. Later, Bakelite would be used for bowling balls, transistor radios, and even costume jewelry.

Rickenbacker pursued the possibility of building instruments using Bakelite after finding out that it had already been used for making clarinets and banjo-ukes. At first, Rickenbacker had some trouble with the Bakelite being brittle. But after some research and development they eventually used a different formula which was molded into a

From Dave Kolars: a postwar model with white cover plates and a double neck 8-string with metal body and Bakelite necks.



Mark Harpainter’s beautiful prewar B-6 with chrome plates.

heavy body to minimize acoustic feedback and harsh overtones while remaining relatively insensitive to temperature changes. The neck was detachable from the body, and that made it more economical to assemble and easier to replace if broken or worn out.

The first ‘Model-B’ Bakelites appeared in 1935 and are described as featuring the 1½-inch horseshoe pickup with knurled adjustment nuts, strings that anchor through the body, five decorative chrome plates, and a bolt-on neck with integrated molded frets. The first models had one volume knob on the treble side and by late 1937-1938 both tone and volume knobs were standard. Seven and eight stringers became available in 1938, and the rare ten-string model was available briefly from 1940 until the start of World War II when production temporarily ceased.

The very rare Bakelite ten stringer did not have a Bakelite neck like others; it was presumed that the additional strings would increase neck tension beyond what the Bakelite molded neck could support. Rickenbacker produced the ten stringer with a heavy metal neck painted in a black “krinkle” finish. From my own first-hand experience in owning one, I have found that the metal neck makes the instrument much heavier feeling when played lap style, and the metal neck also makes these models very susceptible to detuning with changes in temperature.

While the Bakelites did not change much in appearance over the years, some cosmetic changes were made in the five decorative panels used to cover the cavities molded into the body. Most were made of thin metal painted white, which looked good against the black Bakelite. Some, however, came with a silverish color plating which gave them a richer look. Others have been found with black painted panels, and at least a few prewar models have white plastic instead of metal panels.

After the war, production of Bakelite steels continued but with a narrower horseshoe magnet (1¼ inches) and with a

tailpiece string attachment instead of through-the-body attachment of the string ball ends. While postwar Bakelites are mostly fine sounding instruments, these design changes are the very things that are perceived by many players and collectors as tonally detrimental when compared to the big, round sound of the prewar models. Some purists also argue that a mid-'30s change in the Bakelite formula also negatively affected the tone.

Postwar production also saw the cosmetic change from the small metal logo nameplate to the much larger 'T' shaped metal nameplate (1946-1949) and the shield shaped nameplate used from about 1950 through the end of production. Some postwar Bakelites referred to as the 'BD' model (short for Bakelite-Deluxe?) have the addition of a hinged headstock cover piece. Postwar models came in six, seven, and eight-string versions.

Besides the Bakelites, there were two other basic models of lap steels that Rickenbacker made in the prewar years that are worth mentioning—the deluxe Silver Hawaiian and the lower end Model 59, both introduced in 1937. The Silver Hawaiian featured a flashy chrome plated body over brass sheet metal and was the first model to feature stamped metal body construction. Silver Hawaiians have a tone comparable to the Bakelite models as they have the same type of pickup.

The Model 59 had the wide pickup but it was not height adjustable. Though initially available in either a black or ivory (tan) krinkle paint finish, by 1939 it sported a two-tone silverburst gloss finish. It has been claimed that the prewar Model 59 is the finest sounding lap steel ever made when it comes to rock 'n' roll style steel playing. I can attest to having owned a few that could really scream when playing rockin' or bluesy tunes through an overdriven tube amp set for a warm distortion.

Though Rickenbacker proudly makes guitars through the present day, all steel guitar production was discontinued in 1971.

Next time I will be covering the steel guitars made by Gibson, most notably the Console Grande. ■

Going to Honolulu?

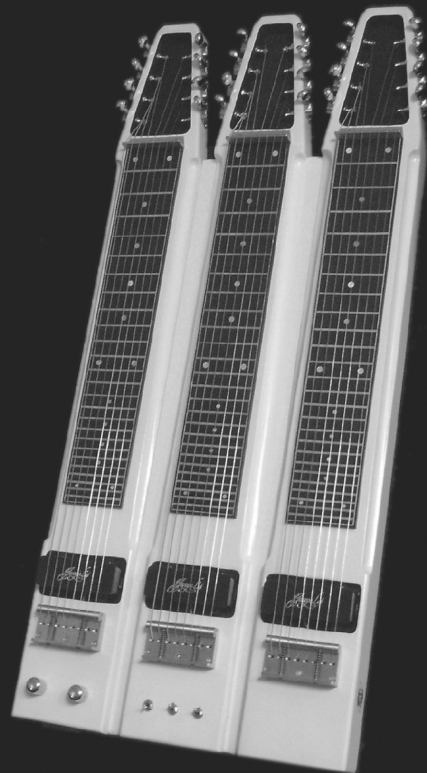
Don't delay registering for our biennial Hawai'i convention. Fill out and send in the convention form (due by March 15, 2011) and the hotel form (due by March 27, 2011) included with your newsletter. Please send each form to the address shown on the form. Tip: You can complete your hotel reservation over the phone by calling 1-800-367-2317. Be sure to give the agent our group booking code 'HSGA' to get the special group rate.



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Scholarship Fund Report

From Kamaka Tom

HSGA scholarship funds have been awarded most recently to Ron Kanahale for lessons for Timi Abrigo and to Alan Akaka's School of Hawaiian Music, Ke Kula Mele, for Alexis Tolentino. I am holding applications for scholarship assistance from two other steel guitar students of Alan's, 10-year-old Mikaele Nishida and 16-year-old Quincy Maka'awa'awa. Both are students of the Kamehameha Schools.

Right now Alan has at least five steel guitar students. Many of his students are learning 'ukulele, *ki ho'alu* (Hawaiian slack key guitar), bass, and singing. My wife Luz and I were able to attend a Windward Mall Christmas performance of Ke Kula Mele, and it was very impressive to see each of his five steel students perform live. All together, about 50 students from Ke Kula Mele performed, including Alexis Tolentino, who played backup steel on "Sleepwalk" and "Mele Kalikimaka."

The majority of Alan's students are in middle and elementary school. They express the "ultimate cool" to their peers and everyone else in the community by showing their new-found music skills so capably. Alan's continued success with Ke Kula Mele students will provide an increased number of applicants, and may even cause us to consider stepping up fundraising efforts and retooling how we award steel guitar scholarships in the near future. ■

2008-2010 Scholarship Fund Summary

Private Lessons	\$1,800.00
Steel The One! Kaua'i Workshops	\$5,000.00
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<i>\$6,800.00</i>

At the first annual Outrigger-sponsored steel guitar festival, five unique styles of Hawaiian steel, Greg Sardinha (left), Casey Olsen, emcee Alan Akaka, Ronald Kanahale, and Jeff Au Hoy.



At Ke Kula Mele's Christmas concert at Windward Mall: (front row) Alan Akaka, Mikaela Nishida, Alexis Tolentino; (back row) Quincy Maka'awa'awa, Al Dixon, Makaninui Ah Chong; (on stage) Derrick Mau. The future is looking bright for steel in Hawai'i!

New Outrigger Steel Festival

Some time back Alan Akaka shared with us the fantastic news that the Outrigger Hotels and Resorts sponsored a steel guitar festival on Sunday, July 4, 2010 at the Waikiki Beach Walk Plaza Stage featuring Hawai'i's great and up-and-coming steel guitarists. The event, which boasts a host of sponsors, is part of Outrigger Enterprises Group's ongoing *Nā Mele No Nā Pua* Music Heritage program.

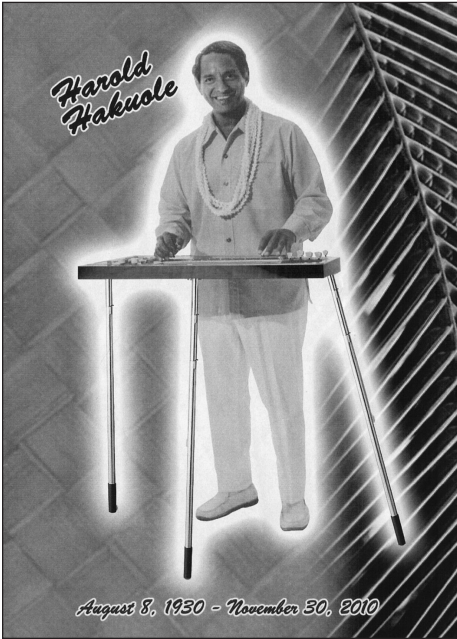
Said Alan, "Much credit goes to Hawai'i State Senator Brickwood Galuteria who went to bat for us at the Outrigger corporate office. After I met with Brickwood a couple times in April, he presented the concept to the [sponsors] and convinced each one to support this venture. I believe that the festival will show that the beloved steel guitar is experiencing a renaissance in its land of origin."

The scheduled events included a free seminar from Alan on the history of the Hawaiian steel guitar and from Dr. Neil Scott on how to build a steel guitar.

Performers at the festival included Greg Sardinha and Po'okela, Ronald Kanahale with student Timi Abrigo and the Abrigo 'Ohana, Jeff Au Hoy and the Jeff Teves Trio, Alan Akaka and The Islanders with student Kilipaki, and Casey Olsen and the Hiram Olsen Trio.

We understand that planning for the second annual event to be held this coming July is already underway. Says Alan, "The date has not been set. However, I am certain that it will be held on Monday, July 4, 2011. Festival coordinators and hotel execs are excitedly asking about this year's plans. I am pushing for a July 3 concert with the keiki and novices of the steel guitar. Presently I have a few students who would be ready for that." ■

CLOSING NOTES



Harold K. Hakuole (1930-2010)

Harold Kaheakulani Hakuole, 80, of Honolulu, died November 30, 2010, at Avalon Care Center. He was born August 8, 1930, in Honolulu. He is fondly remembered as a popular singer, arranger, recording artist, and musician known for his playing of the steel guitar, guitar, 'ukulele and bass. He performed in some of Hawai'i's best known venues, including the Halekulani Hotel, with many of Hawai'i's best and most famous artists. Harold was raised in Kalihi and went to St. Louis School.

As messages of condolences come in from all over the world, we are reminded that for more than two decades, he did most of the arrangements for Hawaiian [recording sessions] on the Tradewinds Records label. He also played on many recordings, including "Two Slack Key Guitars," which featured Gabby Pahinui and Leland "Atta" Isaacs. Noelani Kanoho Mahoe recalled that she first worked on a recording with Harold in 1958 and that he was subsequently involved in one way or another on every recording she produced. Others recalled that he was also very witty, a fun-loving man with a famous smile, and with whom everyone loved to per-

form. "Harold was one of the nicest, funniest, most sincere human beings I have ever known," said New Jersey performer Bill Wynne, a frequent Hawai'i visitor, guitarist and falsetto singer. Longtime friend and fellow singer-songwriter Keith Haugen said Harold had a repertoire of Hawaiian songs to be envied. "And he was a musician's musician," Haugen said, "loved and admired by all." Harold is survived by wife, Doreen; son, James (Jill Leong) Hakuole; daughter, Donnie-Len (Effren) Cordero; step-son, Robert Myers of Honolulu; step-daughter, Doreen Myers of Michigan; and seven grandchildren. He retired after 30 years with Pan American Airlines and retired after 15 years at the Kamehameha Schools.

From Kamaka Tom: "I was able to attend Harold Hakuole's funeral services in Honolulu [ED: program cover shown above]. Many people attended, including local Hawaiian musicians who knew him, and there was a continuous flow of live music during the visitation before the service. A eulogy was provided during the service by Henry Peters, Harold's longtime friend, former Hawai'i legislator and Bishop Estate Trustee and by his surviving wife. Performers during the visitation included former Royal Hawaiian Bandmaster

Another great shot of recently departed steel and dobro ace Dave Giegerich, shown here at the Birchmere's annual Hank Williams Tribute show that featured Bill Kirchen, Rickie Simpkins and other celebs (December '09).



Aaron Mahi, Gary Aiko, Noelani Mahoe, Mona Teves, Hiram and Casey Olsen, myself and others who serenaded the many well-wishers, friends, and family members who were present.

"From what I recall hearing during the services, Harold Hakuole's musical skills were evident as a youth. According to his wife, he liked the Four Freshmen and their brand of close vocal harmony. Merle Kekuku always used to say the same to me. He was very talented, and loved to play music, loved living in Hawai'i. According to his wife, Harold would say, "Why would anyone want to live anywhere else?" He always had a big smile on his face, and loved to make people laugh with his cheerful ways. Yet he was very focused, as shown by his musical accomplishments, and would never admit in his modesty to being a professional entertainer-musician. He was also an accomplished musician on numerous instruments, including the steel guitar, and a fine vocalist.

"Harold was employed for quite a long time by the Kamehameha Schools. During the service, members of the Kamehameha Alumni Glee Club, under the direction of Aaron Mahi, performed several numbers a cappella." ■

Send news, comments, and photos to: HSGA Quarterly, 2434 Waiomao Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424.

Donations

Thanks to member John L. Muir of Plymouth Twp, Michigan for a nice donation this past fall.

Treasurer's Report

(as of December 31, 2010)

General Fund	\$19,599.10
Scholarship Fund	\$16,144.03
Joliet Checking	\$1,717.93
Japan Acct. (as of 10/31)	\$3,501.47
Grand Total	\$40,962.53

Leihuanani

(David Kupele)

Arrangement by John Ely

Medium Ballad

Vs A7

Gm6 D

Stars that shine to - night, Lei - hu - a - na - ni, _____ cast their

T		2	4	7	3	2	
A	2	2	2	7	9	7	4 2
B			4	9	7		4 2

Steel Gtr. (C6th)

5 ma - gic charms on you, _____ while the

T	7	9	7	2	2	3
A	4	7	7	2	2	3
B	4	9				

strum w/ thumb

9 trade winds sway the palms in rhy - thm, _____ just like

T		2	4	7	3	2	
A	4	2	4	7	9	7	2 4 5
B	4		4	9	7		2

13 hu - la maid - ens do. _____ A

T	7	9	2		
A	4	7	4		5
B	4	9	4	2	5

Listen to audio version, if available, at: www.hsga.org/Lessons/QuarterlyAudio.html
 Download tablature key at: www.hawaiiansteel.com/arrangements/download.php

Br G A7 D

mil - lion flow - ers scent the air, em -

T 7 7 9 7 2 5 2 1

A 7 7 9 7 2 5 2 1

B 9 7 9 7 2 5 2 1

21 E7 G A7

brac - ing lo - vers e - very - where. All my

T 2 2 4 2 2 4 4 2 4

A 2 2 4 2 2 4 4 2 4

B 4 4 4 2 4 4 4 2 4

slide 4

challenger section

25 A7 Gm6 D

love is you, Lei - hu - a - na - ni mak - ing

T 7 7 9 7 7 2 2 2 4 5

A 4 7 8 9 7 7 2 2 2 4 5

B 3 7 8 9 9 7 6 2 2 2 4 5

slide strum w/ thumb

29 A7 D G Gm D

all my dreams come true. ritard.

T 7 9 1 2 7 10 10 14 14 14 14

A 4 7 9 0 2 7 10 10 10 14 14 14

B 4 7 9 0 2 7 10 10 10 14 14 14

slide strum w/ thumb

“Hillbilly Hawaiian”: Lani McIntire’s Influence On Mainland Country Music, Part III

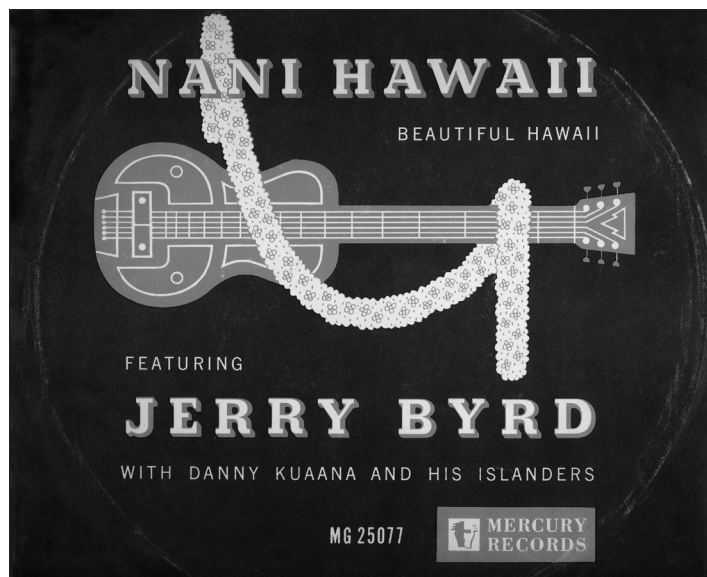
By Anthony Lis

In this series, I have been examining the influence of Hawaiian-born bandleader and multi-instrumentalist Lani Ululani McIntire (1904-1951) on country music. McIntire led steel guitar suffused groups backing early country music stars Jimmie Rodgers and Jimmie Davis. He also co-composed two songs eliciting country-style covers, “Sweet Hawaiian Chimes” and a true jewel in the great American songbook, “The One Rose (That’s Left in My Heart).”

Country music related musicians expressed an interest in covering “The One Rose” following Frank Luther’s recording with the Victor Young Orchestra in August 1936, with Leon Chappelle and Gene Autry soon waxing their own renditions. In the late 1940s to early 1950s, country performers began manifesting a *new* interest in “The One Rose,” the song’s first-person account of “love gone wrong” apparently striking a chord among fans of the then ascendant honky tonk genre. Canadian transplant Hank Snow and African-American singing cowboy-jazz vocalist Herb Jeffries recorded the tune in 1949, and more covers soon followed in the 1950s.

In early 1950, Lani McIntire’s brother Al—along with Danny Kuuana, Mel Peterson and George Ku—backed Jerry Byrd on eight sides at a Chicago recording studio, Byrd’s fourth recording session at age 30. Byrd likely first heard Al

Jerry Byrd’s first solo album recorded in Chicago in 1950.



Member Gracia Mulligan’s photo of Lani with his wife, Virginia.

McIntire’s bass playing some twelve odd years earlier, when as a teenager he caught Lani McIntire’s Hawaiians on one of Kate Smith’s radio programs. In his autobiography, Byrd mentions having met Lani and also implies that he giggered with Al McIntire and Danny Kuaana in Detroit in the mid-1940s. Byrd’s eight 1950 sides were released as his first solo album, *Nani Hawai’i*, and it included “Makalapua,” “Hilo March,” and “Kaulana O Hilo Hanakahi,” which Lani McIntire had recorded between 1944 and 1949 with his own musicians.

Lani McIntire made his last recordings in New York in the spring of 1950. Ironically, his final side was a fifth rendition of “The One Rose,” on the Novelty Trio’s old label, Columbia, performed in jazz-cabaret style. McIntire’s steel guitarist at this point was Hawaii-born Sam Makia (1914-1987). In an unexpected touch, Makia’s entrance on the last half of the final chorus of the recording signals an unusual change from waltz time to 4/4.

McIntire died in New York on June 17, 1951 after suffering a heart attack in his sleep in his Midtown Manhattan Elmwood Hotel apartment, located ironically just a few blocks southeast of the Taft Hotel where Jimmie Rodgers had died of tuberculosis following his last recording session eighteen years earlier.

Country style covers of McIntire’s “The One Rose” flourished for a good quarter-century after his death, with Owen Bradley’s “Quonset Hut” studio on Nashville’s Music Row serving as a locus of sorts for “One Rose” covers through the late 1960s. Both Jerry Byrd and George Morgan recorded the tune there in the mid-to-late 1950s, with Morgan re-recording the song there in early 1965. Other acts covering “The One Rose” at the Quonset Hut in the 1960s

included Owen Bradley's Paradise Island Trio with Byrd on steel, as well as Grady Martin, Jimmy C. Newman and David Houston.

Byrd's smooth, gliding 1955 rendition of "The One Rose" includes an unexpected mid-song modulation down a major third, affording him the opportunity to play the beginning of the second chorus on the lower strings of his instrument. As a contrast, Byrd plays the melody notes of the third phrase in a higher register.

George Morgan's 1965 "The One Rose" cover includes steel guitarist Little Roy Wiggins playing an introduction and sixteen-bar break, while David Houston's recording—pitched unusually high in the key of E-flat major to show off his soaring tenor voice—features an unidentified steel player supplying plenty of "weepy" fills.

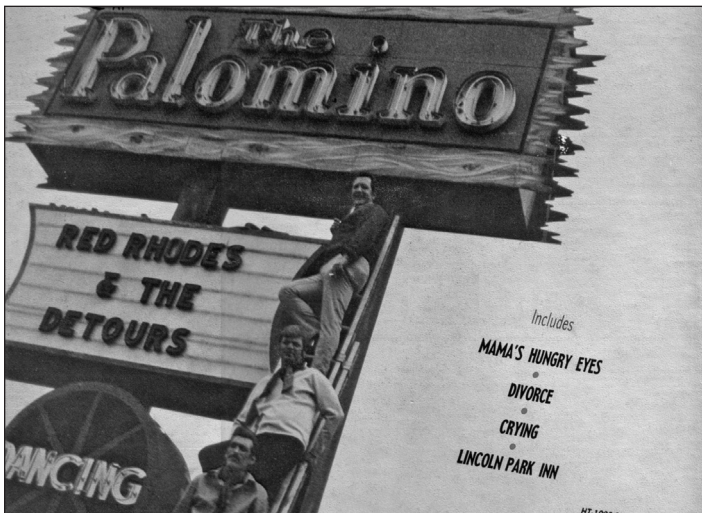
Non-Quonset-Hut covers of "The One Rose" from the 1950s and 1960s included Hank Snow's 1958 recording at Nashville's RCA Victor Studio with Melvin Gentry on steel, as well as renditions by Pee Wee King, Cliffie Stone, and Patti Page, recorded in Louisville, Hollywood, and New York, respectively. King's 1952 cover includes Bobby Koefer on steel, while Page's late-1950s rendition eschews the steel guitar completely for the sounds of Jack Rael's big band.

In 1966, Herb Remington recorded "The One Rose" for his *From Houston to Nashville* LP, recorded at Bobbe Seymour's Nashville studio with noted Canadian steel guitarist Kayton Roberts appearing on half of the tracks.

The 1970s saw Michael Nesmith including a country-rock version of "The One Rose" on his first post-Monkees album, Hank Snow covering the song for a third time, and Jerry Lee Lewis recording three renditions.

Nesmith's "One Rose" was released as the flip side of his falsetto-tinged ballad "Joanne," which hit #21 on the pop

Orville J. "Red" Rhodes (top) with his band, *The Detours*, posing for the cover photo of their "Live at the Palomino" recording.



Bobby Koefer (left), with Bob Manning (center) and his Riders of the Silver Sage taken at KPLT radio in Paris Texas, circa 1948.

charts in 1970. Nesmith's lyrics very closely match those on Jimmie Rodgers and Lani McIntire's premiere recording from forty years earlier, with Nesmith restoring the long abandoned verse. Nesmith's backup trio, the First National Band, included Orville J. ("Red") Rhodes (1930-1995) on steel guitar. Rhodes plays a four-bar introduction, eight-bar interlude, and two short mid-song solos, "trading fours" with a yodeling Nesmith, a musical "tip-of-the-hat" to Rodgers.

Newsletter editor John Ely, remembering the first time he heard the Nesmith cover, recalled: "I first heard the track way before I knew anything about Hawaiian music. I was captivated by the sweetness and nostalgic nature of the track. I listened to it again recently and realized it's far from being a real Hawaiian-style recording. But it was unusual to hear a pop singer do this kind of material and it definitely grabbed me. Listening to a bunch of these crossover recordings in the '60s and '70s got me digging back to the original styles as soon as I took up steel guitar."

Hank Snow's 1972 "One Rose" rendition—which likewise includes the often omitted verse—features the mournful, melancholy sound of Weldon Myrick's steel. Myrick also utilizes a bit of text illustration via his use of a long, falling slide at the second appearance of Del Lyon's words "dark clouds came rolling."

Barry Mazor relates in his recent book *Meeting Jimmie Rodgers* that Jerry Lee Lewis's father's favorite Rodgers record was "The One Rose," which he often accompanied with guitar strumming. Lewis first recorded the song in June 1975 but the track was not released. Lewis's second cover—made six months later—appeared on his 1976 *Country Class* LP and recasts Lyon and McIntire's waltz as a slow, 4/4 shuffle. Lewis—never one to embrace subtlety—amplifies the first appearance of "dark clouds came rolling" with three loud piano glissandos; and just in case the listener

Continued on Page 14

didn't get the "musical message" the first time around, Lewis changes the lyric in the second chorus from "dark clouds" to "thunderstorms"!

By decade's end, Leon McAuliffe, steel guitarist with Bob Wills from 1935 to 1944, had recorded a saxophone-laced rendition of "The One Rose" and also backed Leon Redbone on a cover of the song on Redbone's *Champagne Charlie* album. On Redbone's cover, McAuliffe eschews his usual western swing style of playing for rather Hawaiian sounding fills; a bit of hillbilly-Hawaiian "fusion" occurs near the end of the recording where, as a counterpoint to Redbone's Jimmy Rodgers-esque yodeling, McAuliffe plays the first two phrases of "Aloha 'Oe."

Recent country-related "One Rose" covers include versions by Johnny Cash with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Billy Walker on his 2006 Jimmie Rodgers tribute, and the "retro country" band Lost Country from Fort Worth, Texas.

Cash's "One Rose" cover appeared on his 1996 *Unchained* CD. In his liner notes, Cash acknowledged having

Little Roy Wiggins pictured with his Gibson Console Grande and singer Carl Butler.



known "The One Rose" all his life; his intent was to make a word-for-word copy of Jimmie Rodgers and Lani McIntire's original recording as Michael Nesmith had attempted 26 years earlier. Original Heartbreaker Mike Campbell plays a dobro break including several Clell Summey-like tremolos and also uses tremolo to highlight the words 'heart' and 'rolling' in the chorus. Lost Country's rendition also restores the song's original verse with steel guitarist David McMillan playing an introduction and break on what sounds like an acoustic Hawaiian steel without a resonator.

Since the mid-1970s, several of the other songs McIntire recorded with Jimmie Rodgers have been covered by country, bluegrass, and other roots-based performers. "Those Gambler's Blues" has been recorded by psychedelic-rocker-turned-roots-musician Jorma Kaukonen and progressive bluegrass mandolinist Don Rigsby. "Moonlight and Skies" has been covered by fiddler Brad Leftwich and cowboy-Americana singer and guitarist Don Edwards. And "Why Should I Be Lonely" has been recorded by dobroist Mike Auldridge, nephew of Rodgers's first steel guitarist, Ellsworth Cozzens!

Country-related covers of McIntire's sides with Bing Crosby include the Herb Remington and Willie Nelson renditions of "Blue Hawai'i," the latter recorded for the 1992 film *Honeymoon in Las Vegas*, and Chet Atkins's recording of "Sail Along Silv'ry Moon" with the Nashville Brass.

The Hawaiian and country music interactions discussed in this series came full circle in 1991 when the Hawaiian guitar and 'ukulele duo, the Ka'au Crater Boys—named for an extinct volcano northeast of Diamond Head—recorded "Nobody's Darling But Mine," one of four songs on which Lani McIntire backed Jimmie Davis in fall 1937. The Ka'au Crater Boys sing Davis's song from the viewpoint of a



In a classic pose, Leon McAuliffe playing his quad-neck Stringmaster in the '70s.

young man, as established by Davis and McIntire's 1937 recording. (Davis's original 1934 version had framed the song from a dying young woman's point of view.) The recording includes 'ukulele fills from Troy Fernandez in the verses and some pleasant duet singing by Fernandez and Ernie Cruz, Jr. in the choruses, with the two performers also sharing a mid-song break on 'ukulele and guitar.

From the mid-1920s through the late 1940s—when the boundaries separating Hawaiian music and early country music were somewhat loosely defined—Lani McIntire made important contributions to both genres, with his country music contributions having been surprisingly enduring.

For providing both Jimmie Rodgers and Jimmie Davis with Hawaiian-tinged, steel guitar centered backings; for co-composing two songs garnering country-style covers; for influencing the repertoires of Jerry Byrd, Speedy West, Herb Remington, and Leon McAuliffe; and for likely participating in early recordings of three songs which became western swing standards, we say *mahalo*, Lani McIntire. ■

From Russia With Aloha

Your editor here. Some Quarterly stories arrive at your e-mailbox in neat, tidy packages. Edit a word here, check a spelling there, and bingo, it's ready for print. Not so with the following sketchy story of a steel guitar player from Russia, Igor Sinew. In fact, he's been on our membership rolls for 10 plus years, listed as one of our German members. With the help of Lorene Ruymar and Rudolph Barten, who helped with the considerable language difficulties, we have managed to cobble together a pretty interesting story. Here's Lorene:

It all started with a man in England, Richard Bloomfield, who had bought my steel guitar instruction course. He told me there was a man named Igor Sinew who was born and raised in Russia, heard Hawaiian music and the steel guitar, and became obsessed with learning to play despite tremendous obstacles and limited resources available to him.

Richard sent me a VHS recording of Igor's playing done in the PAL format. It had been circulated in England, and all had written very enthusiastic comments about it as they passed it from one to another. I didn't have the ability to play the tape, so I took it to specialists who converted it to an NTSC DVD for roughly \$50. OK! Now I could see it, too, and I made ten copies to send to different people who might be interested.

In the first hour, Igor—looks to me like he's in his fifties—is playing what looks like a 7-string thing he had built, using an exceptionally long steel bar, and playing Hawaiian songs with a "Russian accent." A nice looking person, but flapping his arms and elbows and flipping his hands and fingers into wild gestures. Nothing like we had see in Hawai'i or over here. Entertaining. Good

music! One of the selections is Igor's own composition entitled "Atoll."

The second hour is in black and white and looks like a radio or TV performance-interview. Then there's another 15 minutes of him playing for a huge audience at a symphony orchestra concert with piano accompaniment, although we don't see the orchestra. Last of all on the DVD are two black and white films from the silent film era, so there's just a musical soundtrack. It's like our Three Stooges films. Just three silly men rushing about doing silly things, chasing with a dog, running through the snow, etc. Perhaps from old days in Russia? Is Igor one of the "characters" in the two short movies? Will we ever find out?

In tracking down what details I could, I relied on two former HSGA members who live in Germany, Frank Baum and Rudolf Barten. They both have contact with Igor. They say he has learned to read, write, and speak German, and they have translated some of my e-mails to Igor. Even so, we couldn't iron out all the wrinkles. But we did finally get that Igor is more a native of Russia's western neighbor Belarus, also known as White Russia.

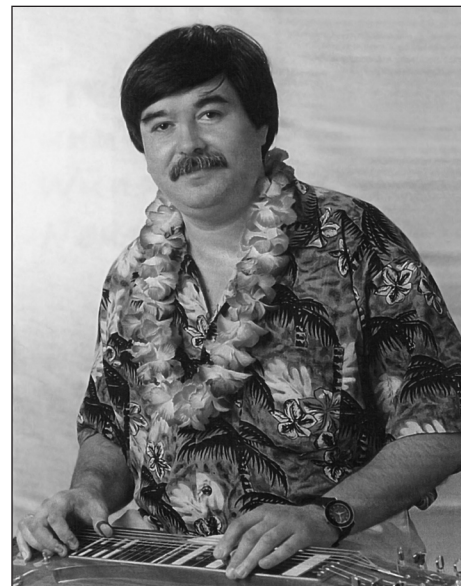
Thanks to Rudolph Barten for conducting the following interview, translating my questions into German and Igor's responses back into English.

Where in Russia did you live?

I was born in Moscow. Before emigrating to Germany I lived in Minsk, capital of Belarus (White Russia). Belarus was a republic of the Soviet Union, but gained independence in 1991. My father was a professional musician playing double bass with the Minsk State Opera. My mother was a ballerina, also with the Minsk State Opera. She died in 1987. My father passed away in Germany in 2006.

When did you move to Germany?

My father, Isaak Freimann, was Jewish and was granted permission to live in



Russia-born HSGA member, Igor Sinew.

Germany. My wife and I immigrated to Germany along with my father in 1997. I was then 40 years old.

Can you read English?

I learned English in school and at an advanced polytechnic academy in Minsk. I am a skilled mechanical engineer for combustion engines. But after immigrating to Germany I lost much of my English. I used to read and write, but at that time knowledge of English was not considered essential—contact with foreigners were very limited. Now my ability to read English is around 30 to 50 percent, but sadly I am virtually unable to speak it.

When did you first hear Hawaiian music, and what made you want to play the steel guitar?

I do not remember when I first heard Hawaiian music. I was very young, that's for sure. It was probably around 1959 or 1960—I was born in 1957. Most of the time I listened to the steel guitar. We had an old German radio with lots of music stations. We could hear a Netherlands program, for example. Anyway, I think that I was listening to unknown players from China most of the time.

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Don Fullmer “pushing pedals” at the Honolulu 2005 Convention with Frank Brandenburg providing backup on ‘ukulele.

More on Steel Guitar Tunings

By Don Fullmer

I really enjoyed John Ely’s article on tunings in the Spring 2010 *Quarterly*. I have always been fascinated with tunings. I think we steel guitar players are a special breed. We hear a run, lick, or chord on pedal or non-pedal steel, and we want to see if we can figure out how to play it or see if we can recognize the tuning or pedal combination used.

I play both pedal and non-pedal steel guitar. When I work up a song on pedal steel I find myself trying to get those same nice chords on non-pedal steel. I’ve surprised myself by being able to find those big chords by altering the tuning slightly or by using open strings, which often means playing the song in a key I wouldn’t normally play in.

Is it true that you could play any tune on any tuning? To me the answer is yes. But then you wouldn’t be able to use important chords that give the song its character; your backup instruments would carry the load for you. Why are there so many tunings? In my view it’s because no single non-pedal tuning gives you the mood chord-wise of the different songs you might play.

I guess this is what caused guitar builders to build steels with more than one neck. I don’t know of a guitar with more than four necks. But look at the advantage of more than one tuning. Now I can just move to another neck for the song and don’t have to bother retuning a single neck guitar for the different songs. Also, the string gauges of one tuning doesn’t often work for other tunings.

So, in conclusion, all I can say is, if you’re happy with one tuning then I’m happy for you. We all play differently and that’s what I like about hearing the song done with a little different touch by different players. ■

Joliet Convention Fee Increase

From Joliet Chairman, Don Weber

Due to the increased cost of presenting the Joliet convention, the 2011 convention registration fee will be increased to \$45 per person. The daily walk-in fee will be \$15. This increase is due to two factors.

First, for the past few years, the Joliet convention has had expenses that exceeded income, which has slowly drained money from the Joliet account. Second, we are now faced with the fact that some services that were supplied at no cost by volunteers are no longer available. The major one is the sound man.

For many years Doug Smith and Floyd Alexander provided our sound at no charge. Three years ago, Fred Campeau and Paul Watkins took over, again at no cost to us. However, 2010 was their last year to provide this service. Thanks to John Hatton, we have found a sound man who will do the job, but it will come at a cost.

The good news is that the cost of the lū‘au dinner and show will stay the same. The cost of the hotel rooms will be \$68 per day plus tax, an increase of only 50 cents.

There will be more information to come in future editions, but we wanted to get the word out now. The Joliet committee regrets this increase, but we find it’s necessary in order to continue presenting a quality convention. ■

Japan Coordinator, “Tom” Tohma performing at the 2005 Honolulu Convention held at the Queen Kapi‘olani Hotel.



COCO WIRE

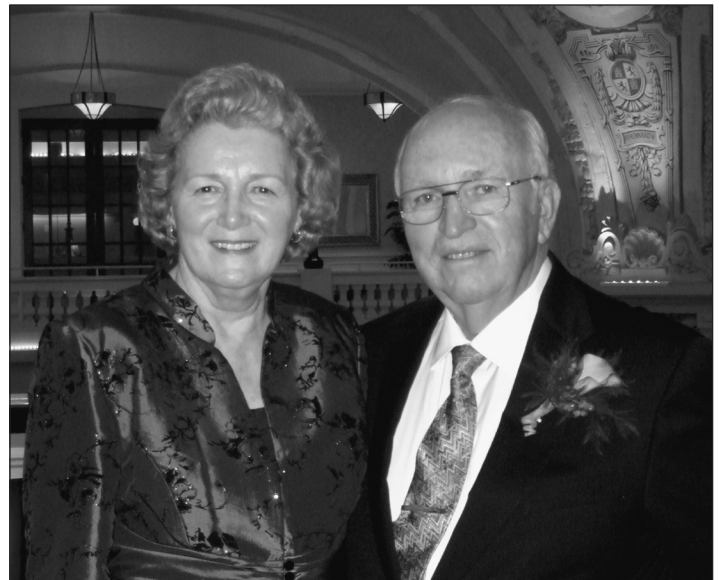
Terrific news from board member **Ivan Reddington**: “Dee [formerly **Dee Ryan**, known to many convention goers] and I were married on November 5, 2010 at the Battle House in Mobile, Alabama. Forty-five friends and relatives attended. Pedal steel player Bill Stafford was my best man, and some other friends brought their guitars and we had a music session after the ceremony. Bill played “Unforgettable” for Dee and me as we danced. I played backup for Bill on some other songs and then played my Benoit resonator guitar as Carroll Benoit watched us play. Carroll made the guitar for me. We had a good time at the historical Battle House and played into the evening.

We received this distressing news from member Terry Saito: Our Japan Coordinator and former Vice-President **Akitomo “Tom” Tohma** suffered a brain hemorrhage on December 12, 2010 and is now undergoing rehabilitation. Says Tom, “I am in a special rehab hospital where I am on a four hour a day rehab schedule under two young and lovely girl trainers.” That’s tough! Doctors are anticipating a 6-month recovery, but Tom is shooting for 4 months. All of us at HSGA are pulling for you, Tohma-san.

From **Kay Das**: “This year I am throwing my hat into the ring again for the 2010 Hawai‘i Music Awards with my just-released CD *Moods and Moments*. You can listen to samples at <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/kaydas3>.” We hope Kay’s CD received consideration by HSGA members. Sadly, due to unexpected delays getting the newsletter out, we were unable to help get the vote out in this award category.

Waikīkī was once again the site of a gala re-enactment of the legendary **Hawai‘i Calls** radio broadcasts. The show

Uncle Ronald Kanahale, steel guitar in hand, posing with his protégés, the Abrigo ‘Ohana, Timi Abrigo (left), Quinn, and Emily.



A super shot of Dee and Ivan Reddington after their wedding at the Battle House in Mobile, Alabama this past November.

was held on November 13 at the Ala Moana Hotel. Just as in the radio show, the program began with the sounds of Waikīkī waves rolling to the shore along with “Babe” Bell’s conch shell tones, and ended with the cast singing “Aloha ‘Oe.” In between, **Nina Keali‘iwahamana, Gary Aiko, Joe Recca** along with **Hiram** and **Casey Olsen** captivated the crowd of 150 with their music. Nina and Gary were given most of the solos and also did a duet on “Ke Kali Nei Au.” Joe portrayed the late announcer Webley Edwards well, and he sang and danced hula. Hula dancers Jackie Booth, Likelike Davis and Janu Cassidy charmed the audience. Casey’s steel guitar solo was also a big hit. Emcee Hale Ka’ohu Rowland had the crowd in stitches as she danced a very vampy “Sophisticated Hula.” It was quite a night, ending appropriately with a rousing standing ovation.

The **Abrigo ‘Ohana** is proud to announce the Waimea Valley Kanikapila at Pikake Pavilion near O‘ahu’s north shore. Says Lanet Abrigo, “Please join us every third Sunday of each month. This event is *free* and open to the public. A Kanikapila is a traditional Hawaiian music jam session. The purpose of the event is to perpetuate the *mele* (music) and the tradition in which it was passed on from generation to generation. All ages and skill levels are welcome. There will also be seating for guests who would like to just come and enjoy listening to the music. We will have amplification, so bring your instrument cable if you would like to plug in. Sound check will begin around noon, with the kanikapila starting at 1 PM and going until 4 PM. Food and beverages are available just a few yards from the Pikake Pavilion, at the Waimea Valley Grill. No outside food or beverages please.” [ED: The Waimea Valley Grill is located at 59-864 Kamehameha Hwy, Haleiwa, HI 96712.] ■

DISC 'N' DATA



Steel Guitar Paradise – Bobby Black (Aton Disc)

Review by John Ely

I recently saw and heard Steel Guitar Hall of Famer Bobby Black at a reunion concert for Asleep at the Wheel, a band we both toured and recorded with at various times throughout the '80s and '90s. I hadn't seen him in over 20 years. He was one of my favorite players then, but I didn't know at the time how much he loved playing without pedals and how much he loved Hawaiian music.

Steel Guitar Paradise is Bobby's first Hawaiian steel guitar solo album, one he's wanted to do since he was a kid. It is extremely well recorded and crystal clear, showcasing Bobby's soft touch, and agile bar hand and vibrato. His playing is clean and he has mastered the subtle use of all the steel guitar tricks to milk harmony out of a steel guitar without pedals. Though Bobby credits Jerry Byrd as his mentor—and he did maintain a long-standing friendship with Jerry—he has achieved what many very fine players do not. Their own musical voice.

The CD begins and ends with a sort of tribute to Hawai'i Calls using outdoor surf sounds he recorded on the island of Kaua'i and closing with a superb version of "Hawai'i Calls." (Check the double stops near the end of

the tune where the voices move in opposite directions!)

Though several of the tracks are reminiscent of a classic Hawai'i Calls delivery such as Bobby's versions of "I Want to Learn to Speak Hawaiian," "Sand," "Blue Hawaii," and "Honolulu Eyes," the arrangements and overall treatment are more expansive and cannot be pigeon-holed. Other colors and soloists share space with the steel guitar and the interplay is very good. A jazz and even a pop sensibility can be heard on some of the tracks. The rhythm section is tasteful and unobtrusive and a couple of the bigger arrangements make use of string section effects and even synthesized choral backgrounds, but it is very tastefully done.

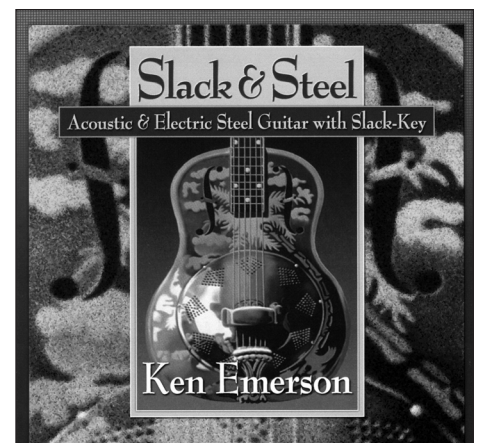
It's hard to pick a favorite track on the CD, but Bobby and the band's version of Kui Lee's "I'll Remember You" is remarkable. If you have a good left hand, you can play single-note lines all day long without "losing" the listener, and Bobby does all that and more on this track. There's a beautiful harmonica solo by Slim Heilpern near the end. Listen to how Bobby plays backup behind the piano solo in "Sweet Someone." Absolutely perfect and, unlike many solo steel records, the CD illustrates how great steel guitar can be in a supporting role.

Other tracks on the CD include: "Dancing Under the Stars," which opens with some of that great lounge-style piano in the Hawaiian style recalling Richard Kauhi; "Hawaiian Paradise" with more nice harmonica playing from Slim; a lovely tune I hadn't heard from Harry Owens, "My Isle of Love"; a very jazzy "Hawaiian Hospitality" with some great use of open strings and nice section work; an almost symphonic treatment of "Bali Hai"; a swingin' "Kaulana O Hilo Hana Kahi" with nice solos; and "Nani Waimea" with nice solos all the way around and some interesting Django-style guitar work.

I remember a tape I had of one of the Jerry Byrd-hosted ho'olaule'as, one

that Bobby Black was invited to play on. As I recall, after Bobby's performance, Jerry can be heard over the microphone saying, "Why am I here?!" Tall praise, when most of us mortals get the infamous Jerry Byrd wire cutter treatment! In short, you can't go wrong with *Steel Guitar Paradise*. Bobby gives a clinic on almost every aspect of steel guitar playing and with his own special accent. Not to be missed!

You can order "*Steel Guitar Paradise*" through CD Baby at www.cdbaby.com—just do a search on 'Bobby Black' and select '*Steel Guitar Paradise*'. If you don't have Internet, you can reach Bobby for ordering details at: 539 Kevenaire Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035; Tel: (408) 263-7259.



Slack & Steel – Ken Emerson (Hana Ola Records, HOCD-2020)

Review by John Ely

And now from master of electric steel to master of the acoustic! Ken Emerson has really outdone himself in *Slack & Steel*. Ken has a rare command of the Sol Ho'opi'i National Tri-cone idiom, ever flowing and musical, never mechanical. So hard to do. You hear this on several tracks, including stunning versions of "Hula Blues," "Radio Blues," "Moana Chimes," "Hilo March" and his own composition "Hotel Street Blues"—don't try imitating that crazy final solo at home. And Ken has that

rapid-fire “trilling” style down! And with just the right touch of whimsy as he does in “Moana Chimes.” In the same vein, “Hanalei Medley” is a clever merging of “Hanohano Hanalei,” “Hanalei Bay,” and “Ka Ua Loku,” classics from Ken’s longtime home, the island of Kaua’i.

Essentially, for the CD, Ken has “cloned” himself. His slack key is in your left speaker and his steel guitar is in the right, and both blend perfectly as if there really were another player in the room during the “takes.” It’s like a personal concert in your own living room featuring some kind of mad genius with a split personality! How does he do it? Or, as Riders in the Sky cut-up Ranger Doug might quip, “Why does he do it?” Because he *can*.

The CD is very well recorded. The acoustic sounds are both rich on the low end and shimmering on the high end. And Ken has the knack of blending tone clusters using open strings and harmonics that sound almost impressionistic. A good example is “Maile Lau Li’ili’i” and his own composition Puakō. Similarly, “I Kona” features a nice blend of acoustic and electric timbres as does Ken’s version of Ray Kane’s “Punahale.” “Ula Nōweo” features a haunting acoustic steel sound with an eerie minor key section.

“Ua Kea,” another of Ken’s own compositions, is done in the rich D Wahine tuning, a great example of how clear and well-recorded the CD is. Other fine originals include “Wai’oli Waltz” and “Wai Lehua.” Altogether, Ken has written five of the tunes on this CD. Impressive.

The CD includes five bonus tracks, “Whinin’ Boy Blues” and four alternate takes of various tracks on the project for a total of 19 tracks. There’s not a weak track on *Slack & Steel*. You have to devote your life to living and breathing this style of music to record a 19-cut instrumental CD without sounding repetitive. And without the luxury of a full band with that many more tones and textures to draw from. Ken has done a fabulous job.

You can order Slack & Steel through Aloha Joe. Price of the CD, shipping included, is \$10.49 within the U.S. and \$12.49 for all others. U.S. dollars, please. Send check or money order (made out to ‘Aloha Joe’) to Aloha Joe, P.O. Box 4777, Lakewood, CA 90711. To place a credit card order, call Cord, Int’l toll-free at 877-648-7881. You can also order the CD or download mp3 versions through most online stores at their going rates. Aloha Joe will soon offer the entire Cord catalog through www.alohajoe.com. ■

It’s Dues Time Again!

Remember, HSGA’s membership year begins on July 1, 2011. Dues are \$30 and all issues go out ‘Air Mail’. Renew today! Don’t miss out on the latest info on Hawaiian Steel Guitar, including news, instruction, and lots of photos.

BUY & SELL

Instruments Wanted

Wanted continuously by Michael Cord for his awesome collection: All models of vintage lap steels (like Hilos, Konas, Weissenborns, Rickenbackers), vintage amps and basses. Contact Michael Cord toll free at (877) 648-7881.

Ho‘olaule‘a Cassette Copy Requested

Looking for a cassette copy of the Jerry Byrd Ho‘olaule‘a that had Bobby Black performing. We believe it was the 1986 Ho‘olaule‘a. This tape was widely circulated according to John Ely and has some great playing on it, including Bobby playing a great version of “Bali Hai.” If you have a copy or know of anyone who has it, please get in touch with Bobby at 539 Kevenaire Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035 or e-mail him at bobby11122@sbcglobal.net.

Steel Guitars for Sale

Offered to HSGA members, some very fine instruments in excellent condition from recently departed Oklahoma member Francis Kosciuk: Steelmaster double-neck with legs, \$900; Steelmaster single-neck with legs, \$450; Excel double-neck, \$900; Gibson B.B. King Lucille, \$850; Gibson 355 (pearl white), \$700; Johnson resonator, \$250. Would prefer to sell to Hawai‘i residents—others will have to pay shipping. Please contact kimo@hawaii.rr.com, or if you do not have Internet access, contact the HSGA office, and we will put you in touch with the seller. The office address is: HSGA, 2434 Waioma‘o Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424. ■

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In the Soviet Union there were players of the “gawajskaja Gitara,” the Russian name for the steel guitar. The first was John Danker (Iwan Sokolow). He was famous in the prewar years, but he only played single notes or thirds, and always with glissando. The second was Alexej Kotjakow. He also played the accordion. Before the war he lived in China, and then afterwards in Magnitogorsk and Moscow. He played professionally between 1950 and 1960 and focused almost entirely on Indonesian songs. Regrettably his steel guitar, one of a kind, was stolen. Afterwards he never played again.

In Minsk I recall listening to steel guitar music on tape, probably from Jim Jensen, recorded on 6mm tape at 19.05 cm/sec. I also listened to Haleloke Kahauolopua on a Soviet gramophone recording featuring Arthur Godfrey with the Harry Owens Orchestra. Another well known steel guitarist in Belarus during the fifties was Alexander Liebermann. But he also played single notes most of the time. I seem to have heard of a steel player by the name of Bosja Fiedmann from Odessa, but I can't exactly recall.

I got the idea of playing Hawaiian steel guitar rather late in life. I had read a story by Jack London entitled “Aloha ‘Oe.” I knew the melody from my childhood days and tried to locate a recording of it. It took some effort but I found a version recorded by the orchestra of Henry Hall, but again the steel guitarist only played single notes. My next step was to visit a music shop and get some details about the instrument. By the 1980s, however, it was just about impossible to buy a Hawaiian guitar in Belarus. So I needed to find a skilled person who could build me one. The prototype was a picture of a lap steel I found in an encyclopedia. The instrument that I am playing in the video is this homemade instrument. Now I have a much better one, one I bought from Frank Baum, an ABM “Sentinel” lap steel made out of mahogany with a humbucker pickup.

How did you learn?

I took piano in school for six years. But in those early years of my childhood classical music was not really appreciated. Later I played the drums and a little accordion. I listened to rock and jazz and then tried to find ways to play it on the piano. My father helped me learn about harmony, rhythm and things like that. Once I discovered Hawaiian steel guitar, the only instruction I could find for my homemade, still unpainted instrument was an exercise book by Jozef Powrozniak, a Polish guitarist. The first song I tried was “Aloha ‘Oe.” After that, a waltz by John Danker with mostly single notes and extremely slow playing.

After a year I got the feeling that the Hawaiian guitar was my instrument. There was not much repertoire at that time

for steel guitar, so I started composing my own or playing old songs that I knew. After five years of practice I was able to play chords with slants and started playing public gigs around Minsk. In 1996 I had a two-hour solo performance at the Jekatarinenburg Philharmonic in Russia.

Did you have a teacher?

Yes and no. I consider myself self-taught. But in Minsk I met a conductor, Boris Rajskej, who tried to play the Hawaiian guitar during the fifties, but without results. He heard me play and told me about someone in Moscow named Alexej Kotjakow, who said that he was impressed with my playing. He then gave me some Indonesian recordings to listen to. He also gave me a couple of lessons between 1984 and 1986. My second teacher was the well known Frank Baum from Germany who also gave me lessons.

What tuning do you use?

I had a very simple tuning on my homemade 7-string instrument, (top to bottom) DBGEDBG. Now on the newer ABM Sentinel 8-string, my tuning is (top to bottom) DBGEDBGF. Frank Baum told me that B11th is a better choice, but I judge the sound of my tuning to be richer. Almost everything that you have in the B11th tuning, you can play with slants on my tuning except at the open position.

In the Russia and the former soviet countries, I've seen three types of steel guitars, a fairly decent 6-string lap steel made by a Leningrad company—I first saw one in Jekatarinenburg—and two models from the GDR (formerly East Germany), an 8-string and a 16-string model, but the string spacing was too narrow. I saw one in bad condition at a Minsk circus, but had already acquired my better homemade instrument. For many years it has been nearly impossible to find steel guitars in Russia or Belarus.

Your editor again. I had a chance to see the video. I loved it! Igor's technique is clearly homegrown and he attempts all kinds of unorthodox maneuvers and bar slants. You can tell he has an excellent ear and he gets everything as close to in tune as is humanly possible given what he attempts. It looked to me like he was blocking by lifting the bar, which flies in the face of accepted technique. But I'm guessing he knows how it's supposed to sound—he uses more than the usual dose of reverb to smooth things out. It's clear to anyone that Igor has lots of natural ability. Lorene Ruymar is planning to make the Igor Sinew DVD available for purchase, proceeds to go to Igor. She believes he could use it. Lorene will also be offering the DVD at our upcoming Honolulu convention. Price of the CD is \$12 (U.S. dollars please) from within North America or \$15 from other lands. Contact Lorene at ruymar@shaw.ca to discuss the “how” and “where to.” ■