

HSGA QUARTERLY

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Inside this Issue...

- 2 Coco Wire – News and Member Gossip
- 3 “HSGA 2014 Festival Preview” by Chris Kennison
- 4 “An Evening with the Punuas” by Don Woods
- 5 Buy & Sell – Member Advertisements
- 5 Member Donation Acknowledgements
- 6 “Byrd-Lee RCA Recordings, Part VI” by Anthony Lis
- 10 “Kaua’i Beauty” – Arrangement by Mark Prucha
- 13 “Thoughts from a New Member” by Tony Fourcroy
- 14 “New Hope for the Future of the Steel” by Don Woods
- 15 “Maui Steel Festival Update” by Addison Ching
- 16 “Jazz Steel Guitar?” by Robert Padwick
- 18 Closing Notes – Andy Barlo, Mac McKenzie, Lane Vifinkle
- 20 HSGA New Member Listing



Instructor Joel Katz (bottom left) with his steel guitar class at U.H. Maui College.

Steel Guitar Classes Launch in Maui

Joel Katz was one of the budding steel players on Maui during your editor’s year teaching and playing at the Old Lahaina Lū’au on Front Street in 1995-96. In recent years, he has been knocking on the door at U.H. Maui College trying to get some steel guitar instruction going, and finally his call for college-level Hawaiian steel guitar classes has been answered. Here Joel to tell you all about it:

I am really excited that the course in Hawaiian steel guitar (Hawaiian Steel Guitar 190v) at University of Hawai’i Maui College is actually happening. We have a great group and I love teaching it. The class is meeting Saturday mornings from 9:00-11:45 AM for the entire spring semester. It is a two-credit

course which is typical of performance classes at the college. There are 12 students enrolled. Keola Donaghy from the Institute of Hawaiian music at the college is helping to support the course through funding and supplying instruments. We are pleased with the enrollment and the course will be offered again in the fall 2014 semester if we can get 10 students enrolled.

We had our first class in January. After the basics of technique we worked on “My Yellow Ginger Lei.” My approach to teaching steel is to learn to visualize repeating patterns in bar positions in common chord progressions and apply these to different keys. I have a series of lessons prepared. Upcoming songs are “Puamana,”

Continued on Page 20

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Volume 29, Issue 113



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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.

COCO WIRE

From Board member **Addison Ching**: "After much discussion, the 2014 Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival will now be held on Saturday, July 19, 2014. The festival was previously scheduled for Sunday, July 20, 2014 as a part of the ongoing Nā Mele No Nā Pua Sunday Showcase. However, this year the Roy Sakuma Ukulele Festival Hawaii will also be held on July 20 in direct conflict with the Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival. By changing the steel fest to Saturday, visitors can take advantage of both festivals and enjoy a large amount of Hawaiian music entertainment."

From our Japan Coordinator **Tom Tohma**: "The Second HSGA Japan Hawaiian Convention will be held on September 20, 2014 in downtown Tokyo. So far, we have 20 steel guitar players lined up, and more than 30 others have indicated that they will come. We expect the numbers to increase as we get closer to the event." Stay tuned for details in upcoming issues.

This from member **Jeff Strouse**: The Rick Alexander Non-Pedal Sessions will be held on March 14-15, 2014 as part of

the Texas Steel Guitar Association (TSGA) annual jamboree near Dallas at the Sheraton Hotel by the Dallas-Ft. Worth airport (DFW). For convention details go to the TSGA website at www.texassteelguitar.org and click on 'Jamboree'. The Non-Pedal room will be open on Friday and Saturday with performances all day and a jam session at night. We'll also have a seminar led by **John Ely** covering a range of Hawaiian steel guitar topics. Our players, in no particular order, include **John Lang, John Ely, Roger Edgington, Bob Blair, Sharon Denney, Herb Steiner, Ivan Reddington, Rose Sinclair, Chuck Lettes, Albert Talley, Tony Locke, Murnel Babineaux, Linda Wright, Jim Evans, Wade Pence, and Margie Mays**. We always have a lot of fun, so please join us for the celebration!

Board member **Gerald Ross** is once again on the staff of instructors at the annual Ashokan Uke Fest in the Catskill Mountains on the weekend of May 23-26. On tap is non-stop 'ukulele workshops and fun. Check the website at AshokanCenter.org. Check Gerald's 2014 concert appearances on his website (geraldross.com). ■

At the 2012 Waikiki Steel Fest, local pros with hotel personnel: Ed Punua (left), Eddie Palama, Greg Sardinha, Conchita Malaquii, Alan Akaka, Nancy Daniels and Casey Olsen.



HSGA 2014 Festival Preview

By Chris Kennison

It's time to register for this year's HSGA Hawaiian Music Festival! Yay! The festival will be held on October 23-25 in Fort Collins, Colorado. Our convention hotel is the Hilton on Prospect Road, which is next to Colorado State University just a few blocks from downtown.

Our Festival Guest Artist

We are pleased to announce that Jeff Au Hoy will be our Honored Artist at this year's festival. Largely self-taught, Au Hoy has mentored under the likes of local steel guitarist Bobby Ingano and brings an "old soul" feeling when he plays his Rickenbacker frypan. His playing style reflects those of steel legends David Keli'i, Billy Hew Len, Pua Almeida, and Benny Rogers. Jeff has recorded with the Brothers Cazimero, Jeff Teves Quartette, Pueo Pata, Aaron Sala and others. In 2004 he received a call to perform at Carnegie Hall with the cast of the Hawaii Calls show. Currently he performs with Cyril Pahinui at the Outrigger Reef on the Beach hotel. Although Jeff is a trained pianist and can play in a number of genres, his interest lies primarily in Hawaiian music of the 1940s and 50s.

Registering for the Festival

You need to do two things to sign up for the festival. First, reserve your hotel room(s). Second, register for the convention and get your 3-day festival pass (\$45). (Note: the information is nicely summarized in the insert accompanying your newsletter.)

Hotel Reservations

To reserve your room, please call the Hilton Hotel directly at (970) 482-2626 and mention HSGA to get the special room rate. Our room rate—\$104 plus tax for a standard double room—is good from October 20 thru October 27 if you'd like to turn your trip into a longer vacation week. Note: You can also reserve your room on the hotel's website (www.tinyurl.com/HSGA-Hilton).

Festival Registration

To register for the festival, send in the festival reservation form included with your newsletter to: Tony Fourcroy, 3442 Greystone Ct., Fort Collins, CO 80525. You can pick up your tickets when you arrive at the hotel.

Alternatively, you can register for the festival online at www.tinyurl.com/HSGA-Festival. If you register online your name will be automatically added to our list of attendees, and you can pick up your tickets when you arrive. Or, you can use the online form to customize delivery of your



At last year's Maui Steel Guitar Festival (and attending most HSGA events), Derrick Mau (left), Jamie O'Connell, Dave Kolars, and Addison Ching. (Photo courtesy of Colleen Ricci)

tickets (e.g. snail mail, printing them directly via the website, or having them sent to your mobile phone).

Your \$45 festival ticket will cover all festival hotel activities, including admission to three days of steel guitar showcases at the hotel, "Talk Story" sessions, and seminars, as well the special Saturday concert (see below). If you have questions, contact me at: Chris Kennison, 3618 Lynda Lane, Fort Collins, CO 80526; Email: cbk@seldomfed.com; Tel: (970) 581-3915.

Friday Night Lū'au

This year the lū'au will be on Friday night! Lū'au tickets will be sold at the festival as always, and eventually online as well. We'll get you the details, including price for the lū'au, in the Spring issue.

Saturday Night Concert

This year, the festival will be capped off with a special concert at the Rialto Theater in nearby Loveland, Colorado on Saturday night. The concert is free for festival ticket holders, \$15 for all others. We are talking to several headliners in addition to Jeff Au Hoy and are expecting a great line-up. More news about the concert as it takes shape.

That's it! Make your reservations early. If you'd like to perform during the member playing sessions, please fill out the festival form included with your newsletter and get it to us quickly. Slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Keep an eye on our website (www.hsga.org) for up-to-date information. ■

Please Contact Us!

Send news or comments to: HSGA Quarterly, 2434 Waiomao Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424. Email us at hsga@hsga.org.

An Evening with the Punuas

By Don “Kona” Woods

During the 2013 Joliet Festival, my wife Joan and I experienced a delightful Thursday evening with our Guest of Honor Edward Punua and his father Victor from the island of Kaua‘i as they shared many stories about their professional experiences and lifelong journey in Hawaiian music and with the Hawaiian steel guitar.

First of all, they were real troopers coming to Joliet so soon after losing Ku‘ulei Punua, a wonderful wife and a mother, in June of 2013. Through their stories about Ku‘ulei, I began to see the picture of a wonderful graceful woman who was filled with a lot of aloha and a lot of talent.

Ku‘ulei was a most sought after professional hula dancer in Waikīkī. In 1952, she performed the hula for Prince Akihito, now Emperor of Japan. She was the featured hula dancer in the movie *Hell’s Half Acre* filmed in Honolulu. Ku‘ulei taught hula from 1954 to 2002 on Kaua‘i, even teaching hula to screen star John Wayne and Lee Marvin’s family.

For 31 years from 1961 to 1992, Victor Punua and his wife Ku‘ulei produced major Polynesian shows six nights weekly for major hotels in Kaua‘i such as the Kauai Surf Hotel (1961-1974), the Kauai Beach Holiday Inn, the Kauai Beach Sheraton Hotel and the Kauai Coconut Beach Hotel (1979-1992). Ku‘ulei choreographed these shows with ancient and modern hulas, along with Tahitian and Maori dances. Many big name entertainers like Harry Owens, Ray Kinney, Hilo Hattie, and Lena Machado made a point of attending and participating in these shows.

In addition, Ku‘ulei and Victor performed in Tahiti, New Zealand, and Japan and took their Polynesian shows to Toronto and Kitimat (British Columbia) in Canada and to Seoul, South Korea.

Edward Punua started taking steel guitar lessons with Barney Isaacs in 1989. This came about because of the influence of his mother who was a personal friend of Barney’s. Edward said that it is funny how friendships occur and help make lifetime connections. For one and a half years, Edward took regular lessons from Barney, and then it was off and on until 1996 when Barney passed away. Edward said that Barney had a real love for the Hawaiian steel guitar and had developed a soft, sweet style that Edward wanted to carry on.

In April of 1991, Edward gave his first public performance at the Kapi‘olani Park Bandstand in Waikīkī. He admitted to being very nervous because he was playing with established professionals like Benny Kalama, Hiram Olsen, and Kalani Fernandes, who were the house band for this Ho‘olaule‘a. On the same program were Casey Olsen, Herbert Hanawahine



At our Joliet Festival last year, special guest Victor Punua (left), Joliet Honored Guest Ed Punua, and Duke Kaleolani Ching.

and Paul Kim playing beautiful steel on a very rainy Saturday. The show was videotaped, which made him even more nervous! He said that his wife, Vanessa, was there with their first born, Kala‘e, who was only two months old at the time. Their children include sons Kala‘e (22), Kawai‘iki (17) and Lilikalani (15), and daughter Leimomi (12). The three boys are all on O‘ahu attending school—Kala‘e is at U.H. and his brothers go to Kamehameha School.

Vanessa started learning hula from Ed’s mother Ku‘ulei at the age of three. She entertained with the Punua ‘ohana for many years and later on went to entertain in Germany, Switzerland, and the mainland U.S. with the Hawaiian Airlines promotion team under the direction of Kawika Trask. Together Ed and Vanessa raised four children and are blessed to live on Kaua‘i with both Vanessa’s and Ed’s family close by. Vanessa teaches hula to the keiki at Wilcox School and loves having special performances with her hula students where she features her boys as part of the band—Kala‘e on guitar, Kawai‘iki and Lilikalani on steel. Says Ed, “Keeping it in the family is such a special way to share the talents that God has blessed us with and make others happy.” Vanessa is Ed’s biggest supporter, encouraging him to continue the steel guitar traditions. She is the administrative assistant at Ed’s full-time CPA practice.

In 1999, Ed Punua performed with his brother Wallis and the rest of the Punua family for nightly shows at the Radisson Hotel in Lihu‘e. He said that it was a very memorable experience playing steel with his mother and wife doing the hula. Though he played in his family’s Polynesian shows on Kaua‘i, he would join groups in Waikīkī at the Outrigger Reef Hotel, the Ilikai Hotel and other venues when on O‘ahu.

From 2006 to 2010, Edward played the steel at the Hanalei Bay Resort in Princeville with Wally and Polei

Palmeira and Vanessa as featured hula dancer. Wally is the brother of longtime, well-known Kaua'i steel guitarist, Ernie Palmeira who played regularly at the Coco Palms until it was devastated by Hurricane Iniki. Edward was very impressed with the beautiful scenery of Hanalei Bay with its gorgeous sunsets as backdrops for his group, the Lilikalani Trio, which also featured Vanessa's graceful hula.

Edward has been recently playing with the Kama'ainas at the Grove Café in Waimea. He likes the laid back atmosphere, "like playing in your own backyard." The Kama'ainas made a DVD in 2009 and cut a CD in 2010.

Most recently, Edward has teamed up with Alan Akaka to teach students on Kaua'i. It has been a huge success starting off with 15 students. Some of the students are continuing on with lessons from Edward. In fact, Alan reintroduced his boys, Kawai'iki and Lilikalani, to the steel guitar. Says Ed, "It was really hard teaching my own children the value of the steel guitar. Alan's method of teaching gets the younger generation's attention, and eventually they see that they can do it and make beautiful music. I haven't given up. Now, they are more eager to learn from me, having Alan's techniques as a foundation." Ed stated that he would like to have HSGA become more involved in the teaching program for steel guitar on Kaua'i by covering some of the flight and teaching costs. This would allow Alan to come to Kaua'i with his proven systematic method of teaching Hawaiian steel guitar.

As Joan and I reflect on our experience with Edward and Victor Punua at Joliet, we will hold the memories of two men from Kaua'i who truly epitomize the "aloha" spirit. It has made a lasting impression and impact upon us, for which we are grateful. Mahalo nui. ■

Members, if you'd like to order a copy of Ed Punua's CD, just drop him an email at ed@punua-cpa.com.

Buy & Sell

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Buy & Sell ads are free for paid-up members.

HSGA Donations

Special thanks to **Kay Koster** of Rockford, Illinois for donating \$50 to our General Fund. Mahalo nui loa!



A photo of Ed Punua's mother, Mary Ann Ku'uleialoha Punua, taken in the 1980s. The photo was featured in an article about Ku'ulei and included in the book, Nā Kumu Hula (The Hula Masters).



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Jerry Byrd's RCA Victor Recordings With Ernie Lee, Part VI

Including Byrd's Other Studio Work from July to October 1949

By Anthony Lis

In this series we are detailing the seventeen RCA Victor sides on which Jerry Byrd helped back country music singer Ernie Cornelison (aka Ernie Lee), recorded between 1947 and 1950 in Chicago and Atlanta. (The final installments will also detail the substantial studio work Byrd plied in Cincinnati from early 1949 through the beginning of 1950, with the current segment focusing on July to October 1949.)

Byrd and Lee first recorded together as the Happy Valley Boys in 1940 while working on the Kentucky-based "Renfro Valley Barn Dance" radio program. Following a stint on Detroit's WJR radio, the two went their separate ways, with Byrd breaking into Nashville studio work backing Ernest Tubb, Red Foley, and young Hank Williams, while Lee assumed a position at Cincinnati's WLW radio involving important duties on the "Midwestern Hayride" radio program (including some possible hosting of the show).

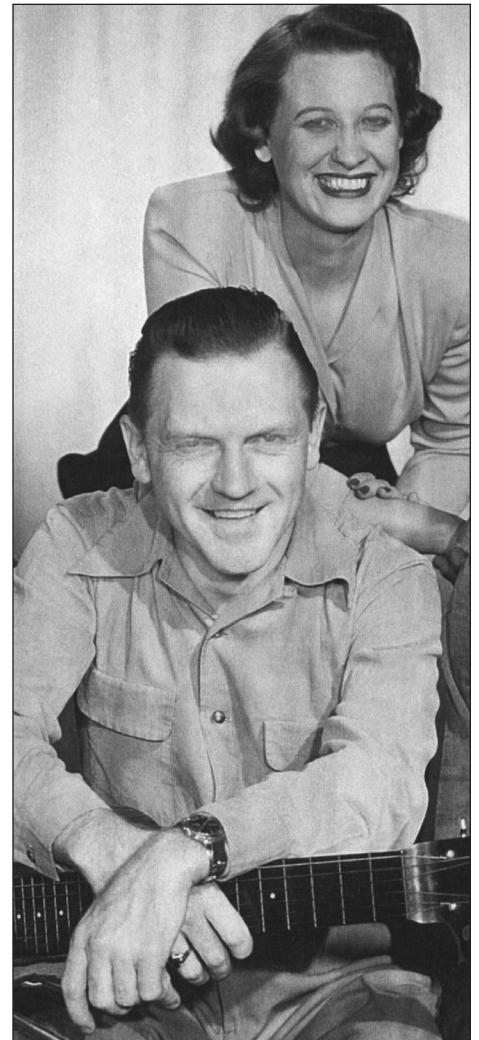
Young Rex Allen, the "Arizona Cowboy."



Byrd and Lee recorded together for a second time in December 1947 when Byrd joined a quartet backing Lee on eight RCA sides in Chicago. (By this time, Byrd was helping accompany Red Foley on his weekly "Grand Ole Opry" appearances.) In October 1948, Byrd joined Lee in Cincinnati when Foley's backing band was hired away by WLW to perform on a new, *televised* incarnation of "Midwestern Hayride." In early February 1949, Byrd helped back Lee on eight more RCA sides in Atlanta.

The preceding segment (in the Fall 2013 issue) covered Byrd's activities from late February through early July 1949. During these four-and-a-half months, Byrd waxed his first four sides as a featured soloist, released on the Mercury label, including "Steelin' the Blues," "Drowsy Waters," "Moonland," and "Byrd's Boogie." Byrd recorded his sides at downtown Cincinnati's Herzog Studios with accompaniment provided by Louie Innis's String Dusters, a quartet of "Midwestern Hayride" musicians. At the Herzog Studios, Byrd also backed Rex Allen and His Arizona Wranglers, Daisy Mae Arnett & Old Brother Charlie, Pete Cassell, and Kenny Roberts. At the King Studios, roughly three-and-a-half miles northeast, Byrd backed Grandpa Jones, the stage name of young banjoist-singer Louis Marshall Jones.

The author stands corrected for his remarks in the Fall issue that Byrd (and not Tommy Paige) was the likely steel guitarist at an April 29 Decca session featuring Akron-born honky-tonk singer Jimmy Work at Nashville's Castle Studio. Craig Maki and Keith Cady offer convincing evidence in their newly published book *Detroit Country Music: Mountaineers,*



Judy Perkins and Jerry Byrd, likely in late 1948 or early 1949 (detail from a larger photo, which was given by Perkins to Ernie Lee's cousin Joe Fothergill in June 2009).

Cowboys, and Rockabillicies that Paige was indeed the steel player. (The authors draw on a 2000 interview that Cady conducted with Work.)

On the Fourth of July 1949, Jerry's wife Thelma gave birth to Lani Jo, the Byrds' first child. Around that time, Byrd again backed Rex Allen and His Arizona Wranglers during a Mercury session at Cincinnati's Herzog Studios. Allen's session began with a recording of "Two Little Brown Shoes," a recent waltz composition by Erwin Reinking (a musician with Cincinnati ties then living in New York City) and Cincinnati songwriter-publisher Joe W. Grieshop.

(King and Grieshop's song concerns a young infant girl who died during the winter.) Byrd is clearly heard in twenty-eight bars of the recording, supplying an introduction and sharing a solo with Allen's violinist. Elsewhere, Byrd supplies appropriately doleful-sounding fills.

Allen next recorded a second waltz, "Over Three Hills," by the Cleveland-based amalgamation of Ernest Benedict, Roy West, Dolly Kendall, and Lenny Sanders. (The quartet's creation concerns a hopeful suitor.) On the recording, Allen was joined by "Midwestern Hayride" cast member Judy Perkins. Michigan-born Perkins joined the "Hayride" in 1948 after performing on radio in locales such as Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Nashville. During a 2009 interview on the "Around Cincinnati" program on WVXU-FM, Perkins related that Allen had originally been scheduled to record "Over Three Hills" with Patti Page; by summer 1949, however, Page had become a "hot" solo commodity with hits on the pop and country charts, and was now "unavailable" for duet recording. According to Perkins, "[The Mercury folks] called me and said would I come over and do this duet with Rex," adding that "I learned the song real quick, and we ... recorded it."

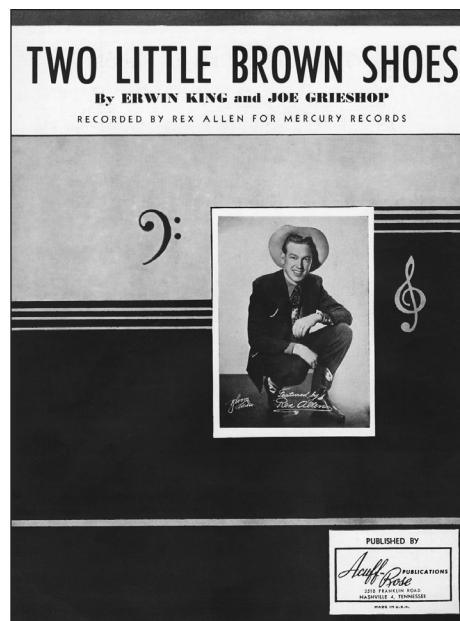
On "Over Three Hills," Allen and Perkins sing in resonant parallel harmony in the first and third stanzas, with the second stanza featuring them briefly singing in call-and-response fashion. Byrd supplies the introduction, shares one break with Allen's violinist, and offers a second break on his own.

In a June 2009 interview with Ernie Lee's cousin Joe Fothergill, Perkins recalled Jerry Byrd fondly, remarking that "boy, he was a talent ... he was one of the best [studio musicians]." Speaking of Byrd in a late-June 2013 phone interview with the author, Perkins added that Byrd had a friendly disposition and that he communicated with people well.

Allen's session concluded with a waxing of "Blues in My Mind," a 1944 song by Nashville songwriter-publisher Fred Rose. Concerning the recording, the Christmas Eve 1949 issue of *Billboard* opined that "Allen chants a country blues most compellingly with a driving Jerry Byrd [steel] guitar solo leading the performance." Rose's up-tempo number (actually closer to the then-burgeoning "hillbilly boogie" genre than the blues) offers Allen a chance to show off his low vocal register. The first break features Byrd reiterating a "boo-wah"-based riff while Allen's electric guitarist plays a boogie-style ostinato. During a second break, Byrd plays his steel in "normal" (i.e., non-"boo-wah") fashion.

On August 8 and 10, Byrd (perhaps with the String Dusters) again backed Kenny Roberts at a Coral session at the Herzog studios. Roberts's August 8 sides included a cover of Jenny Lou Carson's self-reproachful 1944 song "Jealous Heart," which went to #14 on the country charts in late 1949.

Sheet music for "Two Little Brown Shoes," picturing Rex Allen and issued by Fred Rose's pioneering publishing firm, Acuff-Rose Publications. (From the sheet music collection of the Center For Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University)

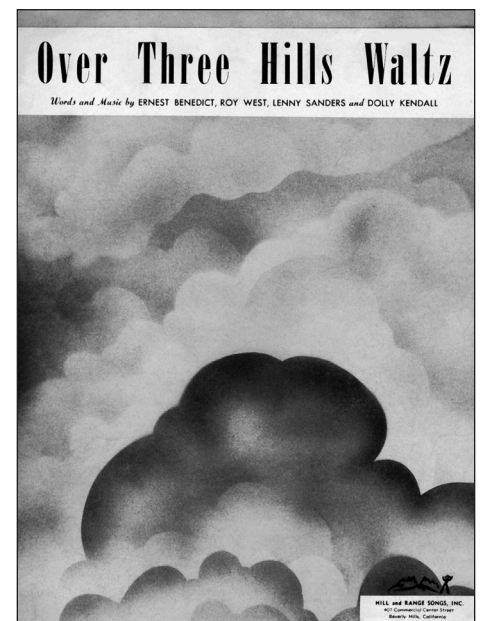


On August 10, Louie Innis and his String Dusters backed Jimmy Work on four Decca sides, cut also at the Herzog Studios. Byrd played on two of Work's sides, "Who's Been Here Since I Been Gone," a sixteen-bar country blues tune first recorded in 1929, and "Surrounded By Water and Bars." The latter side, written by Work, is the plaint of a newly-arrived "lifer" to Alcatraz Prison in San Francisco Bay, to which Byrd adds poignant sounding fills and tremolos, as well as a "boo-wah" effect at the words "the wind is a-blowin'." In their book, Craig Maki and Keith Cady relate that "Work and the studio band [i.e., the String Dusters] performed well, but the records didn't catch on."

At the end of August, Byrd participated in his final MGM session with Hank Williams, who had recently moved from Shreveport to Nashville and was on the cusp of national fame. The session, which was done with the String Dusters at the Herzog Studios,

Continued on Page 8

Sheet music for "Over Three Hills Waltz," recorded by Rex Allen as "Over Three Hills" in summer 1949 with guest vocalist Judy Perkins. (From the sheet music collection of the Center For Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University)





Hank Williams, Sr. in a famous pose.

BYRD-LEE Continued from Page 7

yielded four sides, including “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It” and “I Just Don’t Like This Kind of Livin’,” which both became top-five country hits in early 1950. The African-American-derived “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It” had musical roots going back to the late 1920s, while Williams’s “I Just Don’t Like This Kind of Livin’” was inspired by his current marital problems. Byrd provided steel breaks on both sides.

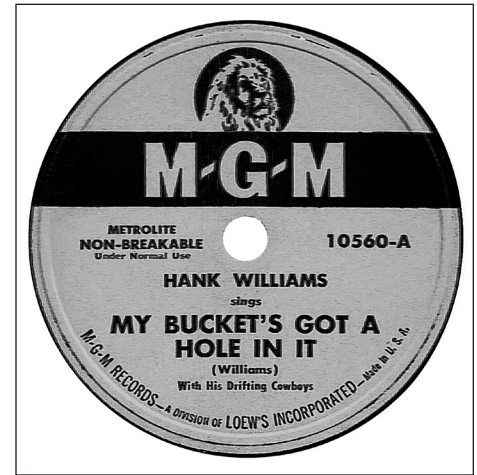
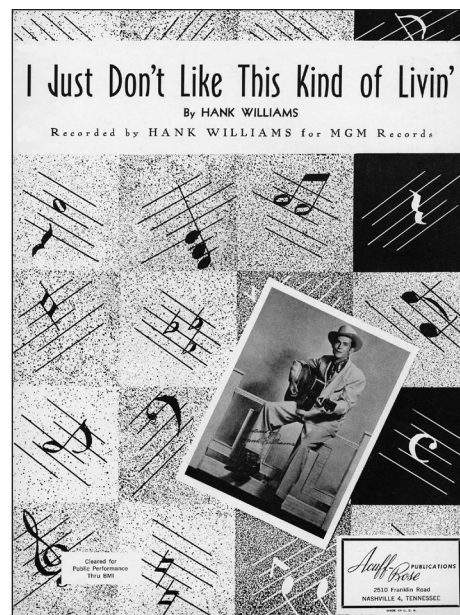
The Czech Republic-based website (countrydiscography.blogspot.com) lists Byrd as the steel guitarist at a Hawkshaw Hawkins recording session for King Records held in Cincinnati on September 2, but to infer from comments made by West Virginia-born steel guitarist Herman (“Jiggs”) Lemley and his son posted on Dave Sichak’s hillbilly-music.com website, Lemley was apparently the steel player for this session.

In Autumn of 1949, Byrd became exceedingly busy. Perhaps with a new mouth to feed in his family, Byrd was more actively pursuing backing work and/or his reputation as an extremely capable studio steel player was spreading. October brought another Mercury

session with Byrd as featured soloist, backed by the String Dusters (presumably at Cincinnati’s Herzog studios). Byrd recorded two more instrumentals, a “wah-wah”- and echo-effect-laden cover of Dave Ringle and Fred Meinken’s 1921 homesickness song “Wabash Blues” (appropriately rechristened “Wabash Wah-Wah Blues”), and Byrd’s own harmonics-filled creation “Steelin’ the Chimes.” After backing Byrd, the String Dusters stayed on to record two Mercury sides with Byrd as a band member, “Chattanooga Boogie” and “Better Back Up Mama.” *Billboard*’s November 12, 1949 issue praised Byrd’s “strong steel guitar” on the former side, while the latter recording features Byrd playing a fine, rather chromatic sixteen-bar break.

Mercury released Byrd’s “Wabash Wah-Wah Blues”/“Steelin’ the Blues” coupling around mid-October. An October 18 Goodwin Radio Shop advertisement in Byrd’s hometown *Lima News* announced that “Hey folks, just received a new release of Jerry

Sheet music for Hank Williams’s autobiographical song “I Just Don’t Like This Kind of Livin’,” published by Acuff-Rose. (From the sheet music collection of the Center For Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University)



Label for the MGM release of Hank Williams’s “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It,” issued November 8, 1949.

Byrd,” adding proudly that “this is a Lima boy.”

At another Cincinnati session during a very busy October, Byrd joined the String Dusters in backing Red Kirk for Mercury, presumably at the Herzog studios. Kirk was a versatile singer who unfortunately never fulfilled the expectations of his early moniker, “The Voice of the Country.” Kirk recalled the October session, his first with Byrd, in Michael Streissguth’s *Voices of the Country: Interviews With Classic Country Performers*, relating that “it took us forever to make [i.e., complete] that session because I got so enthralled with Jerry’s handling of that bar and doing the things he does with the steel guitar ... that takes most steel guitar players fifteen pedals to do. I’d be watching him and I’d lose my place ...”

Kirk’s six sides included the tuneful Hawaiian waltz “Over an Ocean of Golden Dreams,” written by British Columbia-based country music performer Ivan (“Buddy”) Reynolds (1927-1984). Reynolds’s lyrics—rather unusually—fused older Island images with contemporary honky-tonk “angst.” (“There’s a heart that is broken and drifting tonight, on a ocean of golden dreams ... I’m waiting ... alone ... for the day when my dream-boat will sail on to me with a cargo of love

...”) The June 17, 1950 issue of *Billboard* praised Kirk’s recording as a “warm-hearted warbling effort ... enhanced by Jerry Byrd’s Hawaiian steel guitar work” (which includes a thirty-two-bar break), adding that the recording functioned as a “good dreamy dance side.”

Byrd also played on Kirk’s doleful co-creation “Why Do You Care.” Aaron Smithers, Library Assistant for the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, described the side as a “pure country tearjerker” in a July 25, 2013 posting on his internet blog “Field Trip South: Exploring the Southern Folklife Collection” (blogs.lib.unc.edu/sfc/). On the recording, Byrd contributes a sixteen-bar solo in the middle register of his steel.

Byrd also participated in Kirk’s appealing duet with Judy Perkins, “I Wonder Who We Think We’re Foolin’,” written by Fred Rose with “singing cowboy” Ray Whitley. (Perkins again traveled the short distance from WLW to the Herzog Studios.) The tune was based on the old “soft shoe” dance rhythm, over which Byrd provided a four-bar introduction and sixteen-bar break. In her June 2013 phone interview, Perkins reported that she had

never met Kirk until their October recording date. She remembered that Mercury booked two to three hours of studio time, and that everyone learned the previously unseen song quickly, as they were accustomed to doing. Perkins added that the String Dusters all “had good ears,” and that perhaps the biggest challenge was working out the vocal harmonies with Kirk.

Perkins also waxed two Mercury sides as a solo vocalist with the String Dusters—Carl Hoefle and Del Porter’s pseudo-hillbilly number “I Come Here to Be Went With (But I Ain’t Been Yet)” and Louis Innis’s wistful country waltz “I Didn’t Mean to Cry.” The sides were released under the String Dusters’ WLW moniker, the Pleasant Valley Boys. During her June 2013 phone interview, Perkins related that other contemporary female vocalists such as Jo Stafford and Patti Page had had success with hillbilly novelty recordings, so Mercury had her record Hoefle and Porter’s send-up. (Perkins recalled that unless you were a major talent, you had no freedom to pick your own material, adding that “they [the label] told you what to sing.” Perkins expressed dislike of Hoefle and Porter’s song, which she had to render in a “corny type of way,” with an overemphasized south-

ern accent. (The side also included Byrd supplying a fake “wolf whistle” on his steel.) Perkins related that she was glad to be able to get back to her normal singing voice on “I Didn’t Mean to Cry.” The song, a sad breakup number, featured Byrd sharing a solo with fiddler Tommy Jackson, played in the mid-register of his steel.

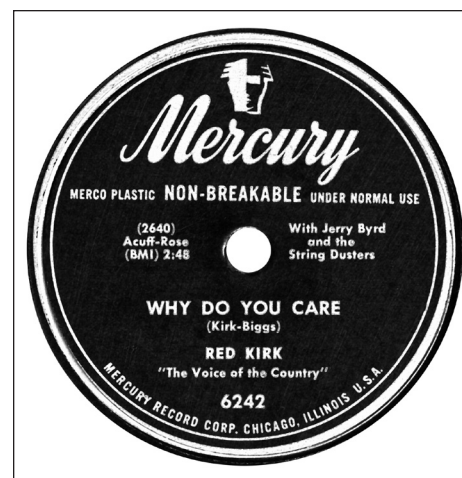
During this same busy day of recording, the String Dusters apparently then recorded two sides by themselves, with Byrd joining the group on Louie Innis’s blues-based tune “She’s Mean to Me,” supplying a rather striking solo exploiting unexpected rhythmic shifts and chromatic chords outside the song’s key of E major.

Thanks to William Lewis Schurk, Sound Recordings Archivist at Bowling Green State University, for assisting the author with listening to some of the recordings mentioned in this installment (and in the previous installment) at the BGSU Music Library during a trip the author made to northern Ohio this past August. Thanks also to Aaron Smithers for providing a dub of Red Kirk’s “Why Do You Care” and to Joe Fothergill for a dub of WVXU-FM’s “Around Cincinnati” program from sometime in April 2009. ■

Label for the Mercury release of Red Kirk’s recording of Buddy Reynolds’s “Over an Ocean of Beautiful Dreams,” issued in summer 1950.



Label for the Mercury release of Red Kirk’s “Why Do You Care.” (From the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill)



Label for the Mercury release of Louis Innis and the Stringdusters’ blues-based tune “She’s Mean to Me.” issued as a “B” side sometime in 1950.



Kaua'i Beauty

(Henry Wai'au)

Arrangement by Mark Prucha
and Alan Akaka

Slow Hula

Intro

Chords: A7, D7, G, A7, D7

Steel Gtr. (C6th)

Chords: G, A, G, B7, Em, G7, C, E7

Chords: A7, G, A7, D7

Chords: G, A7, D7, G, B, G, B7

let ring-----

Audio version: (see page 12)

Tablature key: www.hawaiiansteel.com/arrangements/tabkey.php

16 E_m $G7$ C $E7$ $A7$ G

T 7 7 8 7 5 7 9 7
A 7 7 7 7 4 5 7 7
B 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

Palm Harmonics.....

20 $A7$ $D7$ G $A7$ $D7$

T 7 7-8 9 7 6 7 1 2 2 2 2
A 6 7 2 2 3 2
B 6 7 2 2 3 2

P.H.....

24 G E_b7 C A^b $C7$ F_m A^b7 D^b $F7$

T 3 3 8 8 8 7 8 8 9 11-9 8 9-8
A 2 3 8 8 7 8 7 8 8 8 8
B 3 3 8 8 7 8 7 8 8 8 8

28 B^b7 A^b B^b7 E_b7

T 6 8 8 8 8 8 8 6
A 5 6 8 10 8-7 7-8 8 7 7 8 6 7
B 5 6 8 8 7 7-8 8 5 6 7 8 6 7

32 A^b B^b7 E^b7 A^b D A^b $C7$

T 8 8 7 5 4
A 8 8 8 7 6 6
B 8 8 7 6 8 3 4

36 F^m A^b7 D^b $F7$ B^b7 A^b

T 5 0 1 0 0 1 0 3 5 8 9 8
A 5 0 1 1 0 8 8
B 5 0 1 1 0 8 8

40 B^b7 E^b7 A^b B^b7 E^b7

T 8 11 9 8 7 8 8 8 8 7
A 7 8 10 8 8 8 8 7 8 6 6
B 7 8 8 7 8 6 6

44 A^b

T 8 8 8
A 8 8
B 8 8

P.H. P.H.

For audio of the arrangement, email Mark Prucha at <mgp9993@aol.com> or write him at:

Mark Prucha
2775 Springdale Circle
Naperville, IL 60564

Thoughts from a New Member

The lifeblood of any association is its ability to attract new members. In that effort it can be helpful to get feedback from some of our “newbies.” Here’s an interesting ad hoc interview of new member and up-and-coming steel guitarist, Tony Fourcroy, who was originally a student of Chris Kennison and now studies with Alan Akaka via Skype. Here’s Chris to set it up for you.

I got Tony Fourcroy to join HSGA a few years ago and brought him to Joliet in 2011 where he played his first set (ever) on stage. Tony is a software engineer at Intel in his forties. In a sense Tony is a perfect example of a new member who embodies HSGA’s mission statement. In light of that, Board member Addison Ching had some questions for Tony that he felt would assist the club in better achieving its goals to inspire and encourage new members. So I took Addison’s questions and Tony’s answers and present them here in “Q & A” form:

How did you become interested in the steel guitar?

I liked country music when I was in college. Asleep at the Wheel was one of my favorite bands. It’s not really country music unless there is at least a fiddle or a steel guitar, preferably both. I used to work at the Olympic Club in Boulder where the Dusty Drapes were the house band. I got to listen to a lot of Bob Wills tunes.

What is your interest in Hawaiian music and Hawaiian-style steel?

We went to Hawai‘i several years ago and spent one evening at the House without a Key seaside patio at the Halekulani Hotel. That was one of the most enjoyable evenings of my

An impressive array of steel guitars on display at Joliet 2013.



Playing at Joliet 2012, Tony Fourcroy of Fort Collins, Colorado.

life. The people were friendly, the view was spectacular, and the band was great. That’s aloha right there. Ever since then I’ve wanted to try to recreate that experience.

Are you interested in other types of steel guitar playing such as country or rock?

Heck, yeah. I’d like to get good enough to be able to sit in with a country band sometime. I saw Dan Jones at the Denver steel show and he blew me away with his jazz renditions on the steel. I’d like to be able to do that.

What do you expect to get out of the association from your membership?

It’s an opportunity for me to get up on stage in a friendly setting. It’s an opportunity to listen to and learn from a lot of other steel players. It’s a great way to network for information, resources and equipment. I value the mission of scholarships for young steel players and I’ll continue to support that. The conventions are three full days of fully laid back aloha. What a vacation!

What do you think the association can do to attract a younger audience?

You’ve got to take aloha to the people instead of expecting people to come to find aloha. How about as part of the convention, doing a Friday afternoon session at the mall. It seems like Alan [Akaka] is always having his kids play at the mall. It also seems that this music should be played outdoors. That [was] kind of tough to do at Joliet in October.

[ED: Tony will be helping organize our upcoming October 2014 festival in Fort Collins, Colorado. Mahalo, Tony! See our festival preview article on page 3.] ■

New Hope for the Future of Hawaiian Steel Guitar

By Don "Kona" Woods

Veterans of our two steel guitar clubs (HSGA and AISGC) are continually looking for young new "finds" to appear that will give hope for the future of the Hawaiian steel guitar. At the 2011 HSGA Convention, Mark Prucha, a young man still in high school, suddenly appeared out of nowhere and appeared to give rise to that hope. [ED: We heard from Ron Simpson that it was the Williams Twins—Joanne Parker and Janis Crum—who were trying to find Mark a steel guitar teacher in the Chicago area and ultimately suggested Alan Akaka's Skype lessons via the Internet.] After only three months of lessons with the Master Kumu, Mark showed a lot of promise and gave a performance that showed poise and accomplishment. The audience was impressed and knew this special young man had a special talent.

Mark does have a special gift for music. When he was only six years old he began playing the piano. At 12 years of age he started classical guitar. He learned both instruments by teaching himself and using various instructional courses. But now, he says, "The Hawaiian steel guitar is my instrument of choice because it has individuality like no other instrument." What a bright future this young man has!

Mark has continued to take lessons from Alan over Skype. He showed so much progress that he was invited to appear with Alan at the Third Annual Waikīkī Beach Walk Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival in June 2012. You can catch his playing on YouTube—just go to www.youtube.com and search on 'Mark Prucha steel guitar'.

At our final Joliet Festival, Frank and Donna Miller, who were there in the beginning helping to make it all happen. Big mahalos!



At Joliet 2012, "fast out of the chute" steel guitarist Mark Prucha with our Williams Twins, Joanne Parker (left) and Janis Crum.

Mark was back for the 2012 Joliet Hawaiian Music Festival and gave an outstanding performance playing such classics as "Haole Hula," "Hula Heaven," "Hilo March," "Mapuana," "From Hawaii To You," "Pua Lilia," "Noho Paipai," and "Maile Swing." Later, he joined Alan Akaka at the lū'au show where they played a lovely duet of "Beautiful Kahana." That was a special moment of kumu and student playing with a special feeling that certainly brought chills up and down the spine of the audience.

Mark continues to impress at HSGA get-togethers and makes regular trips to Hawai'i to perform and take in the local steel guitar atmosphere. Certainly, the future of Hawaiian steel guitar is looking brighter!! ■

Register for the HSGA Festival!

It's time to register for the HSGA Hawaiian Music Festival which will take place on October 23-25 in Fort Collins, Colorado. You need to do two things to sign up for the festival. First, reserve your hotel room(s). Second, register for the convention and get your 3-day festival pass. The information is nicely summarized in the insert accompanying your newsletter.

A Word on Photos...

We love to get photos from members! A few things to keep in mind. Please avoid sending prints that are grainy or faded. Originals work best and we promise to send them back on request! Digital camera output usually works very well—make sure you use a high resolution setting (at least 250 dots per inch). Digital images that are internet quality (72 dots per inch) are not suitable for print media and cannot be used for the Quarterly.

Maui Steel Festival Update

By Addison Ching

The 2014 Maui Steel Guitar Festival is taking shape. Due to last minute lineup changes there will now be eleven featured players from Hawai'i, California, Texas and Japan! In addition, open stage sessions will give players from all over the world a chance to entertain the festival audience. Among the featured performers are Alan Akaka, Jeff Au Hoy, Greg Sardinha, Tony Locke from Austin, Texas, Kiyoshi "Lion" Kobayashi from Tokyo, Japan, and Kanika Pila from Yokohama, Japan. Also included are Maui's own steel guitar players Ross Ka'a'a and Geronimo Valdriz. This year's festival also features two female players, Owana Salazar and Patti Maxine from Santa Cruz, California. The complete lineup of featured players and open stage performers is listed on the festival website.

Education about the steel guitar is an important part of this festival. School visitations will be made by teams of featured and student players to educate students about the Hawaiian steel guitar and encourage them to take interest in perpetuating this art form. The students will not only learn about the history of the steel guitar but will also get to see and enjoy steel guitar music played by players who are their own age. The students will also have an opportunity to ask questions and "try out" the steel guitar.

This year's festival will feature daytime workshops that will give festival attendees a chance to learn how to play the steel guitar, the 'ukulele, or receive information about Hawaiian music and slack key and Hawaiian-style singing.



At last year's Maui Steel Guitar Festival, "Next Generation" players Alexis Tolentino, Keen Ching, Kawa'iki and Lilikalani Punua with backup provided by Gary Aiko, Addison Ching, Kala'e Punua, and Alan Akaka. (Photo courtesy of Colleen Ricci)

Hawaiian arts and crafts workshops on hula and lei making will also be offered. Open stage sessions on Friday and Saturday will give players of all levels of experience an opportunity to showcase their talent to festival goers. Evening ho'olaule'as on Friday and Saturday evenings will present a different lineup of featured players and dancers each night. Kanikapila jam sessions will cap off each day's program, with festival attendees encouraged to bring their own instruments and jam with the featured players and festival musicians. Festival attendees will also enjoy lobby entertainment by Maui's Joel Katz and be able to see Geromino Valdriz's collection of vintage steel guitars.

The festival will be held at the Ka'anapali Beach Hotel in Ka'anapali Beach near Lahaina, Maui. The hotel is making available various travel packages at special festival rates for attendees. Reservation information, along with the complete program, performer biographies, and playing schedules, are available on the festival website at www.mauisteelguitarfestival.com. This year's festival will be held on April 11-13, 2014, and is free and open to the public. ■

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Mahalo, Members!

Keep those letters and photos coming! Send to: HSGA Quarterly, 2434 Waiomao Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424; Email: hsga@hsga.org and johnely@hawaiiansteel.com.

It's Dues Time Again!

Remember, HSGA's membership year begins on July 1, 2014. Your membership is up for renewal if your mailing label shows "X 6/14" next to your address. Dues are \$30 and all issues go out 'Air Mail' (see the insert included with your newsletter). Don't miss out on the latest info on Hawaiian steel guitar, including news, instruction and photos.

Jazz Steel Guitar?

By Robert Padwick

Jazz! What, on a steel guitar? Yup! I always pick the weirdest paths in life.

Some would say that any non-pedal steel playing aspiring musician is living on some sort of tangent that no “normal” person would bother with, or at least stick with. For me, though, there is something strangely addictive in the multiple tunings, the multiple strings, the whacky assortment of guitars, and the fact that almost no one around my neck of the woods plays or cares about steel guitar. Good to be different, that’s what I say! Ask my boss and she’ll say, “Yup, he’s different all right.”

So, jazz... Why? Well, it’s simple. I’d been following Lorene Ruymar’s course for a year or so and doing okay with it, but I was starting to get an itch to play steel guitar in a band. At the same time, I’m conscious that I’m not all that good, playing only what I feel comfortable with, and at a snail’s pace. Playing in a group would surely test me—and the patience of others—and enable me to broaden my horizons and improve my technique. Distant relatives of my wife Burdena expressed interest in me playing with their country band, but it really sounded like they wanted a pedal steel sound. After listening to their CD, modern country rock, I never followed up. I can’t slant that fast, and I prefer old school country anyways, if I’m to play country.

Then, out of the blue, I received a promotional email from the Vancouver Symphony School of Music in my hometown of Vancouver. They started a jazz school this past summer and, whilst aimlessly munching on a sandwich one day at lunch break, I noticed that one of the course titles listed was Jazz Combo! I emailed the school right away and described my guitar in detail, my tuning (A6th), and my playing level. I included information about HSGA, photos of me in a Jerry Byrd pose, and what I had been doing to learn to play an instrument they probably had never seen. Then I waited, and I waited—and then a month or so later, an email came back from them saying (more or less), “Yup, okay, but know that, aside from music theory, you’re on your own with any musical challenges that come up playing the steel guitar since no one at the school plays it.” Sounds like the sort of trouble I like. I signed up right away!

I figured there was an added bonus in going this route to play in a group—they all paid to be there, so likely they would be compelled to keep showing up even though I was there! By the way, for those who follow jazz, or are curious, my instructor is James Danderfer (sax-clarinet) and the head of the school is Jodi Proznick (double bass), both professional musicians who are well known to many jazz enthusiasts. James has a keen curiosity for the steel guitar, maybe



Vancouver, BC member Robert Padwick with his Tremblay steel.

because it’s different, or maybe he’s heard Buddy Emmons play pedal steel with an alto sax in the mix. Anyway, whatever the reason, I’m back at the school for a second term as I type this.

Now, I can read music at a fairly rudimentary level, and I can “Fat-Cats-Go-Down-Alleys-Eating-Birds” the circle of fifths thanks to Lorene Ruymar’s course. But when I showed up that first night, “Song for My Father” in F minor was dropped on the music stand, and right out of the gate we began to practice at full tilt—me, a drummer, a bass player and a standard guitar player with the instructor on alto sax. My brain screeched to a halt and the wheels fell off! During the course of the rehearsal, I randomly picked my way through the melody of “Song for My Father” and three other jazz standards. When I got home, I sketched my fretboard on a sheet of paper over and over in an effort to sort myself out (I should have used a photocopier, I know). My mind was reeling and I wondered if maybe a different tuning would be a good idea. But not knowing enough about the other tunings, I decided to stick to my “8-string A6th” guns, thereby hopefully avoiding an early trip to the funny farm.

On the following week I picked through the melody and solos pretty well, but chords at a fast 4/4 tempo were killing me. My “sorted” bar positions sounded all wrong. (It’s only as I write, post course, that I have decompressed enough for the positions to start to sink into my brain and become more instinctive.) Soon, the regular guitar players came to know me affectionately as “the guy with the [insert expletive here] steel guitar.” Yes, I have thick skin... And, yes, they were fooling with me.

Stress and mental overload aside, I was having a lot of fun. Never have I learned so much about what I don’t know in such a short time. Let me put it this way: I knew there was

Continued on Page 20

CLOSING NOTES

Norman Kenneth “Mac” McKenzie

We received the following sad news from New Zealand member Rex Churcher: “Aloha from rainy New Zealand. I recently returned from visiting my daughter and grandchildren in Rockhampton, Australia to belatedly learn that my longtime friend ‘Mac’ McKenzie had passed away on June 14. Also, a [short time] later, his wife Louisa passed away.” Some of you are aware that Mac was founder of the New Zealand Steel Guitar Association, and he was always a great help to us with any story on New Zealand steel guitar.

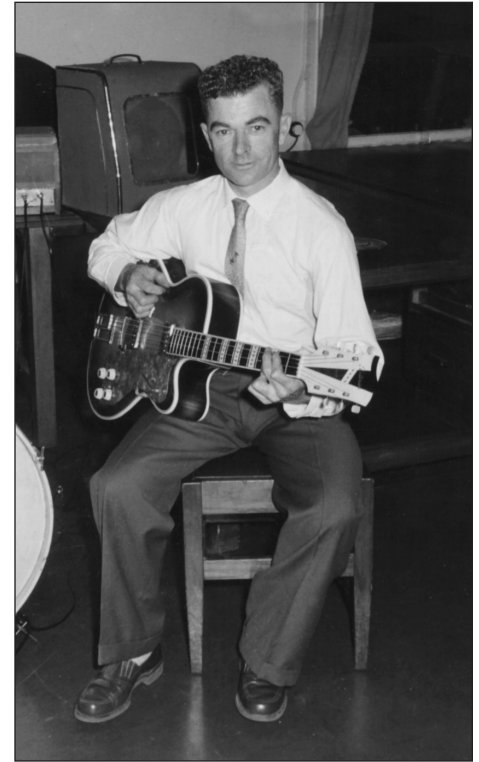
Chris Bourke—author of the award-winning book *Blue Smoke: the Lost Dawn of New Zealand Popular Music 1918-1964*, which John Marsden reviewed in the Fall 2011 issue—recently wrote a nice tribute to Mac, which we reprint here in its entirety. Here’s Chris:

“In the early 1950s, it was Hawaiian-styled pop that dominated the fledgling New Zealand record industry: players such as Bill Wolfgramm and Bill Sevesi, singers such as Daphne Walker and Pixie Williams. Crucial to the genre was the lap steel guitar, which

was on sale here from at least the mid-1920s. Without the contribution of musician and historian Mac McKenzie, I would have been floundering when writing about the Hawaiian genre for *Blue Smoke*. Mac had been involved in the scene since the late 1940s.

“More recently he was the editor-writer of the *New Zealand Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association Gazette*, in which he detailed the history of the genre. He wrote of the days when steel guitars were everywhere in New Zealand, and of its early virtuoso Mati Hita, born in Taranaki in 1914. Mac knew everybody on the scene, and the names of lost legends flowed from him with anecdotes that captured their characters: besides Wolfgramm and Sevesi, there were Ray Walker (Tupu Waka), Gus Lindsay, Tony Lindsay, Doc Bettany, Lou Mati, and Jim Carter. Often the Gazette featured an obituary of a player whose career would otherwise be lost, and Mac would always headline the piece ‘Sad News’.

“I have just heard that Mac McKenzie passed away on June 14, 2013 from pneumonia. He was a wise, gentle man with a long memory, a sense of history, and a love of Polynesian Auckland and its music. Looking at a



Mac McKenzie with his Antoria guitar in the 1950s. (Mac McKenzie collection/Chris Bourke, *Blue Smoke*)

Cutting up at a New Year’s gig on Kawau Island in 1952, Mac McKenzie on steel guitar with the Wicky Wacky Wooers. (Mac McKenzie collection/Chris Bourke, Blue Smoke)



map of Auckland, he rattled off the players and the venues where Hawaiian music could be heard: ‘There was the Maori Community Centre, the Manchester Unity Hall—we were playing there and got ousted by the Keil Isles, they offered a cheaper price—also clubs on Wellesley Street and Cook Street; the Catholic Social Centre on Pitt Street; the Trades Hall on Hobson Street, then up on Newton Road was the Orange, and St. Seps [ED: short for St. Sepulchre’s]. Down Khyber was the Railway Hall, Newmarket—Bill Sevesi was there and also in Te Papapa at the football club there—then back to Merrilands where the Hulawaiians played the dance hall, then out to the Point Chev Sailing Club, and so many played out there.’

“How did Mac get interested in the Hawaiian steel guitar? As Mac tells it, ‘I was born in 1931. Shortly after the war, my brother came back and he got me started on it. He used to buy

Continued on Page 18

records—Hawaiian records and cowboy records—that’s where the music started coming in, and then I got hooked on one particular song of Sol Ho’opi’i’s, the ‘Twelfth Street Rag’. How does he do that? And my brother was in the territorial army with Ray Walker, so Ray Walker set us up and got me a steel guitar and a little amplifier and got me a teacher, Doc Bettany. So it was all laid out for me and all I had to do was just follow.’

“Thanks to Michael Colonna for directing me towards Mac in 2006.”
-Chris Bourke

Your editor again. We received the following from Mac’s daughter, Alena McKenzie: “Norman Kenneth ‘Mac’ McKenzie was born on June 12, 1931. He was raised on a farm in Otorohanga. When his brother returned from the war in 1945 he started buying Hawaiian records, and Dad was fascinated with the sound. His one and only steel guitar, a black and chrome 8-string Commodore electric, was made by Bunny Milne, who later taught Dad how to make the two guitars that we still have today.

“Dad played in a lot of well-known places in the ‘50s and ‘60s and with well-known musicians—Ben Tawhiti, Tony Laiman, Ralph Cox, Rex Churcher, Doug Lomax, and Ron Carter in addition to those that Chris already mentioned.

“Norman and Louisa met one night when Dad was recording some hula songs for Tua Kaai, a well-known hula instructor. Louisa was at the studio that day learning hula when they spotted each other. They were married in 1961 and enjoyed 52 years of marriage together. They have three daughters and one grandson. They loved their music and were lucky enough to go to Hawai’i twice. They were a good team, Dad singing and Mum doing the hula. Their passion was Hawaiian and Samoan music and they loved going to the

Hawaiian steel guitar club meetings and made many lifetime friends there.

“Sadly, Dad got sick very fast and passed away on June 14, 2013 two days after his 82nd birthday, Mum five and a half weeks later after a long illness of heart problems and being on dialysis for ten years.

“They loved each other too much to be apart and are now together once again, pain-free and happy.”

Lane Vifinkle (1933 – May 2013)

News doesn’t always travel fast via “coco wire” here at HSGA. We were saddened to learn of the passing of longtime member Lane Vifinkle, an accomplished and versatile musician, who hailed originally from the town of Rhoon just outside Rotterdam in The Netherlands. Here’s Lane’s wife and musical partner Cheryl to fill you in:

“Who would have dreamed that Lane Vifinkle would learn to play the steel guitar in The Netherlands? Rudi Wairata, a very popular Indonesian steel guitar player who loved Hawaiian music, was the catalyst that compelled Lane to learn that instrument. Lane joined a popular Hawaiian group known

as The Honolulu Minstrals. They even performed on live TV in Holland during the 1950s. Lane’s steel guitar style is very much like Rudi Wairata’s.

“Lane became a U.S. citizen in 1958. Coming to America had always been a dream since World War II when the Americans dropped food for the Dutch. He never forgot that.

“His love for Hawaiian music never diminished. Once established as an American in Costa Mesa, California, he continued that love by forming the South Pacific Gospel Tones. He balanced the love for Hawaiian music with his love for gospel and jazz. He was a very good upright bass player.

“When we were married in 1993, we began doing Hawaiian gigs (as Hawaiian Spirit) in Costa Mesa and continued performing in Colorado Springs when we moved there in 1996. Soothing sounds permeated many retirement and nursing homes, churches and private parties in the area, as we performed many lū’au-type events. Lane operated a home studio, Creative Recording Studio, and loved working with local artists. He did many projects over the years including a CD for noted

Lane Vifinkle, one-person Hawaiian band!



Lane donning his jazz bassist persona.



Hawaiian steel guitarist Alika Herring, who played in the style of Sol Ho‘opi‘i.

“Lane was a self-taught lover of all kinds of music and remembered his father bringing home a variety of instruments for him and his ten siblings to play. Thus, he learned the accordion, violin, upright bass, guitar, steel guitar, bongo drums and some piano. He recorded a CD titled “One Person Hawaiian Band,” where he played all the instruments and sang all the parts on the recording.

“One of the highlights of Lane’s steel guitar memories was being able to attend several of the HSGA conventions. We especially enjoyed a visit with Lorene and Art Ruymar in Vancouver not too long ago.

“He played his heart out until the very end. On Wednesday, May 8, 2013, he played for choir rehearsal at church. On Sunday, May 12, he wasn’t able to get out of bed. He passed away on Wednesday, May 15, of acute leukemia that had successfully hidden in his body and wasn’t detected earlier.

“We share many good memories of our association with HSGA. Keep on ‘strummin’, musicians!”

Your editor again. Lorene Ruymar wrote us the following nice note: “We felt so honored to have Cheryl and Lane Vifinkle visit us. There’s no doubt they were doing God’s work, and joyfully as well. So if we weren’t playing our steel guitars we were out touring the town with them, and before chomp time at the dinner table we held hands, bowed our heads, and said “thank you for this meal.” That was so nice! And now it is hard to believe Lane is no longer among us. He certainly appeared to be strong and healthy.”

I was perusing some steel guitar forum postings and saw right off that Lane was a natural wit. In closing, I’d like to share the following priceless post: “My wife and I do weekly music for hospice care. Since we have to go from room to room, she sings and I play guitar and sing harmony at times. In the beginning we were obviously inexperienced. On one occasion, we were informed that we had just sung for a person that had passed away... It’s a sure way to not get any complaints.”

Lane’s CD “One Person Hawaiian Band” is available through: Cheryl Vifinkle, 2020 Okeechobee Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915; Tel: (719) 596-1225. The price of the CD is \$6, which includes shipping within the U.S.

Andrew J. Barlo (1943 – December 2013)

We got some very sad news a few weeks ago that we have lost one of our core members, Andy Barlo, known to all our convention goers. He had served as interim president of the Aloha International Steel Guitar Club, and together with his wife Elaine, were a tireless team that we came to rely on for making our club get-togethers go. Here is an excerpt from the newspaper notice:



Where the magic happens at our festivals—a classic “behind the scenes” shot at Joliet of Andy Barlo and wife Elaine (foreground) with Donna Miller, Millie Tipka, and Kamaka Tom.

“Andrew J. Barlo, 70 of Schererville, [Indiana] passed away peacefully on Friday, December 27, 2013 at the Rush University Medical Center, Chicago. He is survived by his beloved wife of 47 years, Elaine (née Gallas), loving father of Ken (Rachel) Barlo of Schererville and Ryan (Christine) Barlo of Cedar Lake, Indiana ...

“Andy Barlo was born on April 6, 1943 to Andrew and Helen (Janik) Barlo and was a lifelong resident of the Calumet Region [in Northwest Indiana]. He was a graduate of George Rogers Clark High School, Class of 1961, and was a U.S. Army Veteran of the Vietnam Conflict serving in Germany. Andy was a graduate of Purdue University receiving his bachelor of science degree in architectural engineering and was a retiree of the U.S. Federal Government (HUD) Native American Indian Program with a service of 18 years. Andy enjoyed the Hawaiian steel guitar and had a great respect for the Hawaiian people and their culture. He was a member of the Aloha International Steel Guitar Club, the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association and he could play the ‘ukulele. Devoted to his family, Andy will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him. In lieu of flowers, memorials to the Maui Food Bank (Mauifoodbank.org) or to the charity of your choice would be appreciated.”

We got a nice note from Art and Lorene Ruymar: “Andy Barlo played steel guitar quite well. The outstanding thing in our memories is the way Andy and Elaine both helped us do the chores of running the convention, helping at the reception desk, greeting convention goers. They were always ready to do the job and they did it well. They always worked *together*. If I were to speak at his memorial service, I’d say, “Andy has gone home.”

Our thoughts and prayers go out to both Andy and Elaine. *Aloha Ke Akua, E Andy.* ■

E Komo Mai! Welcome, New Members

Is your address correct? Please notify us!

UNITED STATES

MAURICE J. BEAUDIN, 6631 Mariposa Dr., El Paso, TX 79912

JOE STEWART, 454 Ridge Rd, Golden, CO 80403

BARB ANN BERG, 8210 80th St. S.E., Snohomish, WA 98290

JEFF REMMELE, 130 West Ave Ramona, San Clemente, CA 92672

KEVIN J. SKOPICK, 2061 County Y, Tomahawk, WI 54487

FRED LONG, 806 SW Cohasset Drive, Ankeny, IA 0023-9219

Mahalo, Members!

Keep those letters and photos coming! YOU are the heart of our association. If possible, send original photographs or output from a digital camera. Please send news, comments, or photos to: HSGA Quarterly, 2434 Waiomao Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816-3424. Email us at hsga@hsga.org.

MAUI CLASSES Continued from Page 1

“Sea of Love,” “Lahainaluna,” “Sleepwalk,” and “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

Songs are taught with bar positions and options for accompanying a singer and also as harmonized solos. I have practice tracks available online and instructional videos for each song on my college YouTube channel. I can be reached at 808-280-0722 or at www.joelkatzmaui.com. ■

Wailuku, Maui steel guitarist and instructor, Joel Katz.



a lot I did not know, but finding out what it was I had to do to remedy the problem was invaluable, something that decades ago many a teacher failed to convey. I’m guessing I would have stumbled across the fact eventually, but I reckon I cut out a year’s worth of fumbling around, and the class forced me to revisit some of the boring stuff like scales. I honestly thought I had a pretty good handle on my tuning, but that first practice session showed gaps in my playing that were broader than the Grand Canyon. I was madly pumping chords into John Ely’s chord locator (www.hawaiiansteel.com) every day just to validate if what I was thinking matched some sort of reality. Most of my lunch breaks were filled with random grunts and occasional exclamations of “Huh?” and “Yes!!” I’d be sitting in the lunch room, and I’d look up and exclaim to any poor soul within range, “Hey, I found all the minor and dominant chords on this thing, I think!” and they’d reply with a blank stare and make a mental note that from now on, avoid the guy with the Ketchup-stained cheese grater, or whatever the heck that thing is.

The final evening of the course involved a live performance in the school’s Pyatt Hall. Anyone can attend and it’s a great way to wrap things up. After the performance we all bundled down to the pub, and my Tremblay steel guitar was passed around so everyone could have a look and, boy, were there a lot of questions! On the way home I ran into another student with an odd-looking instrument case in his hand. “What’s that?” I asked. “A sitar,” he said. “What you got?” I told him it was a steel guitar. He added, “A steel guitar—in jazz?” I replied, “Yeah, and a sitar is not weird at all!” We laughed and went off in our separate oddball directions. He turned as we headed our separate ways and shouted, “Back next year?” to which I reply, “You bet!”

Everyone made it through the course, and most of us are back for more. Some have played a year, some for decades. I feel a community building, and I want the steel guitar right in there. It feels great when someone says, “Oh, you’re the guy on steel guitar. Cool!”

If you live near the Vancouver BC area and fancy some fun playing in a combo setting, in modern, soundproofed practice studios with like-minded players of all levels of proficiency, you could do a lot worse than check out the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Jazz School. They try to find the right band slot based on your own assessment of your playing level. And yes, anything goes, so bring a Hawaiian number that could be adapted to a jazz feel, and see how things roll out.

Next Hawai’i convention, I hope to play on stage, perhaps only to accompany those more proficient than I—but either way, I hope to see you all there. It’s a lot of fun. Mahalo! ■