

HSGA QUARTERLY

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by the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association

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At the 2014 Nā Hōkū Hanohano awards show, steel guitarists Dwight Tokumoto (left), Greg Sardinha who took the honors in the Instrumental Album category and Jeff Au Hoy.

Greg Sardinha a Hōkū Winner!

From Sandy Sardinha

We got this late-breaking news from Sandy Sardinha just before press time. Greg has won the 2014 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award for Instrumental Album with his Keala Records release *Stainless: Steel Guitar Stylings of Greg Sardinha* (see John Berger's *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* review which we reprinted in the Fall 2013 newsletter). Big congratulations to Greg for his achievement in a very competitive category! Greg is known for his unique approach to steel guitar, and he is very skilled at arranging material outside the standard Hawaiian repertory, a great asset in his goal (and ours!) of getting younger local musicians inter-

ested in taking up the instrument. In his acceptance speech he said, “It’s a nice plus for the Hawaiian steel guitar. We need some help. We need to get in line with ‘ukulele and slack-key. We’re falling behind.” He also said that he wanted to make a contemporary steel guitar CD to get more young people interested in learning to play the Hawaiian steel guitar. Unfortunately, Greg didn’t get to play during the awards show.

About the awards show, Sandy commented, “It was a good night for Greg. The winner in the Rock category was Stuart Hollinger’s *Dangerous Crossing* CD, which Greg co-produced and recorded at his Sma’Kine Studio

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association's 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. Submitted items should also be e-mailed directly to the newsletter editor at johnely@hawaiiansteel.com.

HÖKŪ WINNER *Continued from Page 1*

for the Keala label. Also, the winning CD in the International Album Recognition category, "Moe'uhane" by the group Hoene, was partially recorded at Sma'Kine. Greg played Hawaiian steel guitar on both recordings."

The "Stainless" CD is available at the Keala Records website (KealaRecords.com). All CDs on the site are \$15 plus shipping. However, to celebrate the Hōkū award, Keala Records is extending a special offer to HSGA members—25 percent off all online orders. To get the discount, simply enter the promotional code 'HSGASUMMER' at checkout. Members without Internet can order any of the Keala CDs by mail. The price is \$15 per CD—add \$5 shipping and handling for orders outside the U.S. Send a check or money order to: Keala Records, 1605 Ulupii Place, Kailua, HI 96734. Please include the name of the CD(s) with your order. Email kealarecords@yahoo.com or write to the above address for further information. ■

COCO WIRE

New member Gale Warshawsky sent us the following: "Enjoy the music of Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian music at the Winter Concert at Windward Mall in Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i, Saturday, December 20, 2014 at 11 AM. Students under the direction of Kumu Alan Akaka will perform songs of Moloka'i, Kaho'olawe and Lāna'i as well as Christmas tunes on steel guitar, 'ukulele, guitar and Hawaiian style bass. For more information call (808) 375-9379 or visit kekulamele.com.

Thanks to Don Weber for pointing out an omission in the Fall 2013 newsletter. Says Don, "In the article 'HSGA Bids Farewell To Joliet' the efforts of the Joliet sound men over the years were acknowledged. However, there was no mention made of Fred Campeau and Paul Watkins. During the years 2007 to 2010, they provided the sound at no charge to Joliet. In fact, Fred came to the final lū'au show this year. They did a fantastic job for four years until it became too much because of other commitments." ■

At the Maui Steel Guitar Festival's Friday Kanikapila jam: Kaipō Asing (left), Larry Prather, Shirley and "Kona Bob" Stoffer, Jack Aldrich, Tony Locke and Mālie Lyman.



Japan Convention Preview

By Japan Coordinator Tom Tohma

The Second HSGA Japan Convention will be held on Sunday, September 28, 2014 at the BRB club in the Ginza district of Tokyo. Ginza is just like Broadway in New York, and BRB is the membership club of Keio University graduates I used to belong to.

There are 46 members in HSGA Japan and 34 of them are Hawaiian steel guitar performers who love *hapa haole* Hawaiian music. There are Hawaiian music groups in all 47 prefectures in Japan. The groups usually have three to five members, and are normally led by the steel guitar player, who selects and arranges the group's repertory.

Twenty steel guitar players will perform at the upcoming Japan convention including Yoshitake Sakamoto with the "Palm Islanders" from Miyazaki in Kyushu, Asao Katagiri with the "Blue Coconuts Islanders" from Aisai-shi near Nagoya, Kunitika Kadoi with "Wikiwiki II" from Hiroshima, and Yoshiaki Otake with the "Blue Hawaiians" from Hokkaido. Those from the Tokyo, Yokohama, Kawasaki and Shonan areas include Chise Yamagishi of the "Spa Hawaiians," Masakatsu Suzuki with "Mahana Lua," Hidekazu Kinukawa with "Island Magic," Toshimitsu Shiina with "Lani Welina," Mitsuo Fujii with the "Fuzzy Hawaiians" and "Lion" Kobayashi with his "Trade Winds" band.

Three steel guitar players, Hideki Ida, Akira Saito and Moto Suzuki, will use a music sequencer for backup. Steel players not appearing with their own group include Shinichi Kakiuchi, Naohito Okubo, Katsutoshi Ogata, Hideko Kobayashi and Yoshinori Nihachi. They will rely on other members to back them up for their performances.

Alan Akaka told me during our recent visit to Hawaii that he would come to Tokyo to perform at the convention, and we are pleased to include him as headliner at our show.

The BRB club will open at 11 AM on September 28 and our staff will begin the stage setup. The first group will play at 11:40 AM. Alan Akaka will close the show with his 6-6:30 PM appearance.

Continued on Page 20

It's Dues Time Again!

Remember, HSGA's membership year begins on July 1, 2014. Your membership is up for renewal if the mailing label on your newsletter envelope 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.



At the first ever HSGA Japan Convention in September 2012, the Spa Hawaiians with Mrs. Chise Yamagishi on steel, Masaki Tokoro on guitar, Kazuo Ohno on 'ukulele and vocals, Miss Reiko Watanabe on bass and Kashio Hashizume on guitar.

Events Calendar

July 17-19, 2014—Winchester Convention

The annual Aloha International Steel Guitar Club convention in Winchester, Indiana.

July 19, 2014—Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival

The music of steel guitarists Alan Akaka, Jeff Au Hoy, Bobby Ingano, Eddie Palama, Owana Salazar, and Greg Sardinha, free and open to the public, 3-7 PM at the Waikiki Beach Walk Plaza Stage.

September 28, 2014—HSGA Japan Convention

The Second HSGA Japan Convention at the BRB club in the Ginza district of Tokyo, 11:40 AM.

October 23-25, 2014—HSGA Annual Festival

Our inaugural club convention at our new venue, the Hilton Hotel in Fort Collins, Colorado.

December 20, 2014—Winter Concert

The music of Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian music under the direction of Kumu Alan Akaka at Windward Mall in Kāneʻohe, Hawaiʻi, 11 AM. For more information call (808) 375-9379 or visit kekulamele.com.

April 24-26, 2015—Maui Steel Guitar Festival

Concerts, workshops, kanikapila jam sessions, and more at the Kāʻanapali Beach Hotel on Maui's Lahaina side.

HSGA Festival Update

By Chris Kennison

Aloha all. Here's wishing you a fun-filled spring and summer. Plans are moving forward for our next gathering on October 23-25 in Fort Collins, Colorado this year. Here is some more news and logistics information to help you with planning your travel and your stay.

I'm excited about our festival this year—it's going to be big fun. As of May 1, we have about 25 folks signed up already—we've never had this many, this early. I keep hearing from folks who are planning to come.

Guest Artist and Headliner

We are excited about the latest news! And that is, we will have Sally Van Meter as our other headliner for the Saturday night concert at the historic Rialto Theatre in Loveland, Colorado. The show will feature our Guest Artist Jeff Au Hoy from Honolulu and Sally, who lives in Lyons, Colorado. It should be an amazing evening of music.

Hotel Rooms and Festival Pass

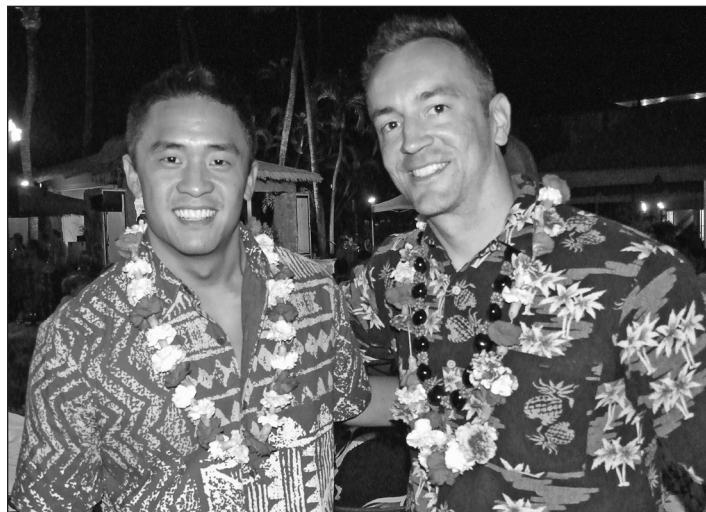
Registering for the festival is a two-step process: making your hotel reservation at the Hilton Hotel and purchasing your weekend festival pass, which gives you access to all club events during the festival *and* the Saturday night concert at the Rialto Theatre in Loveland. You can reserve your room and purchase your festival pass online at HSGA's website (www.hsga.org). Click on the festival link on our home page to go to the festival page, and then use the BrownPaperTickets link to purchase your pass (\$45). To book your room, scroll down the page a bit and you'll see a link to the Hilton Hotel online reservations page.

If you do not have Internet access, you can purchase your weekend festival pass using the form included with your newsletter—just follow the instructions on the form. To book a hotel room you must use the online reservations link or call the hotel directly at (970) 482-2626. When reserving, don't forget to ask for the special HSGA club rate—see the registration form for room prices and other details.

Festival Overview

As we have done in Joliet, our main activity is our members sharing and playing steel guitar and Hawaiian music in a comfortable, supportive showcase atmosphere. This is our 'Steel Guitars in Concert', and it runs all three days from about 9 AM to 4 PM.

Use the registration form included with your newsletter to sign up for a time slot. Time slot requests will be honored whenever possible. Each player will have 20 minutes to perform and 10 minutes to get on and off stage. Times may



At the Maui Steel Guitar Fest, Jeff Au Hoy (left), who will be our Guest Artist in Fort Collins, with Tony Locke from Austin, Texas.

change depending on how many sign up. I have a feeling playing slots will be a scarce item this year. Bottom line—sign up early!

Steel guitar performers, you will need to round up your own backup musicians from volunteers at the festival; there will be many folks willing to play guitar, uke or bass for you. Please bring at least two sets of chord charts for your backup musicians.

Thursday

Thursday kicks off our steel showcase at 9 AM, and in the evening after dinner we'll have our popular "Talk Story" session with Jeff Au Hoy, our Honored Guest from Hawai'i this year. This is always a fun conversation—very informal and I always learn something new about steel guitar or the music trends in Hawaii. Then we jam!

Friday

Friday continues with the morning and afternoon Steel Guitars in Concert in the main ballroom. I expect a few vendors this year as well. We will have additional space in the hotel for vendors, seminars, and jamming. Friday evening has no planned activity at this time. This may change, but you can take Friday evening to explore Ft. Collins and find a new favorite restaurant or nightclub. The brand new city mass transit shuttle has a stop right next to the hotel. Called MAX, it's a clean-energy shuttle that bisects the city and will get you safely to the nightlife downtown in about five minutes.

Saturday

On Saturday, we will again be offering workshops on a range of topics, which are free to weekend pass holders or anyone who walks in and pays the daily admission price of \$20.

We're putting together 'ukulele and steel seminars during the day Saturday, which will run concurrently with the steel guitar showcases in the ballroom. Stay tuned for seminar details in the Summer newsletter. On Saturday evening we'll have the concert in Loveland, Colorado at 7:30 PM.

Travel Information

Getting to Fort Collins by air is very easy. Denver International Airport (DIA) is served by most of the major airlines in the world. From the airport you drive west a short distance to a toll-way called E-470. This takes you north-west and intersects with I-25 north of Denver. You simply drive north on I-25 until you get to the Prospect Road exit in Fort Collins and go west until you get to the Hilton. Keep the mountains on your left and you can't get lost. The whole commute is about three turns, five stop lights, and about an hour's drive depending on traffic.

Airport Transportation

If you don't want to rent a car, we have a discount deal with a van service called Green Ride. You can call them at 970-226-5533 or visit their website (www.greenrideco.com). To get the discount, make sure you specify that you are going to the Hilton in Fort Collins for the Hawaiian steel show in October. The rate is \$33 per person one way. However, each added person on a single reservation pays only \$20. So a couple will pay \$53 one way, three people would pay \$73, and so on. Green Ride will take you from DIA to the hotel. Numerous other shuttles are in service out of DIA, too. [ED: at press time Chris advised us that the Green Ride website is a bit confusing. It's probably best to call them directly using the above phone number.]

Where You Will Be Staying

Fort Collins continues to be recognized as a top western city for retirees and for those seeking an active lifestyle. Voted number one in surveys by *Money* and *Fortune* magazines, it recently was cited as one of the happiest cities in the U.S—over 300 days of sunshine fall on “the Fort” each year. So even if it snows, it melts in a day or two. It is home to Colorado State University and numerous high tech companies like Hewlett-Packard and Intel.

The Hilton has a nice setup so you really don't need to leave all weekend. They have a restaurant, bar, coffee shop, spa, lounge areas, pool, and more. And getting around town is pretty easy. The mountains are on the west side so you can't get lost.

Getting Around Town

The Hilton Hotel is directly across the street from Colorado State University. A short walk and you are at the student union and the library. It's a lovely campus for a walk. The

main campus covers a one-mile square section of land. In October the 130-year-old trees in the scenic centerpiece of the campus, called the Oval, should be showing their fall colors. There are some restaurants within a block of the hotel but the best ones are downtown. A two-mile drive from the Hilton will take you to the famous Old Town shopping and dining district downtown. This little district, just a few blocks worth, contains within it a large chunk of our approximately 459 restaurants, micro breweries, nightclubs, and many buildings from the last century that are on Colorado's historical register. Old Town also features an independent movie theater. And with funky shops, microbrewery tours, a really cool Ace hardware store, pianos in the alleys and street art, it's a fun place to be any time of day.

The hotel has a shuttle bus, but the newly opened, \$85,000,000 transport system called MAX is the town's alternative-energy people mover that runs north and south through town. You can hop on a half block from the hotel and be in Old Town in a few minutes. All along the MAX route there is access to museums, music stores, restaurants, movie theaters, stores, and even a Walmart if you want. MAX opened on May 10 and should be running very smoothly by October.

A Final Word

The move from Joliet to Fort Collins is a big deal for HSGA moving forward as we attempt to appeal to longtime members and attract new ones. We understand that big changes involve some growing pains. It looks like we're going to have a nice turnout this year, and we look forward to seeing you this fall at our inaugural Colorado event! ■

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Waikiki Steel Festival Preview

By Addison Ching

The Fifth Annual Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival, formerly known as the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival at Waikiki Beach Walk, will be held on Saturday, July 19, 2014. This year's festival will feature the artistry of steel guitarists Alan Akaka, Jeff Au Hoy, Bobby Ingano, Eddie Palama, Owana Salazar, and Greg Sardinha. The festival is free and open to the public and will run from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Waikiki Beach Walk Plaza Stage. Validated parking will be available.

In addition to the featured master players, *Nā Makua*, the adult steel guitar students of Alan Akaka's Ke Kula Mele Hawaii School of Hawaiian Music, will be showcased as both individual and ensemble players. The performances may include a three-part steel guitar arrangement written by Alan of "Ka Wai A'ō Namolokama." Ke Kula Mele's "Next Generation" students (ages 10-18) will also perform under Alan's direction.

An exhibit of vintage steel guitars will also be available for public viewing. Past exhibits have featured vintage steel guitars from Magnatone, Supro, Rickenbacher, Canopus, Gibson, National and Fender.

This year's festival was originally planned for Sunday, July 20 as a part of the Outrigger Hotels' *Nā Mele No Nā Pua* Music Heritage Program, normally held on the third Sunday of each month. However, this year's 'Ukulele Festival Hawaii is also scheduled for that date, presenting a direct conflict with the planned steel guitar event. By mov-



At last year's Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival at Waikiki Beach Walk, Mark Prucha (left), Alan Akaka, Bobby Ingano, Casey Olsen, Jeff Au Hoy and Greg Sardinha. What a line-up!

ing the steel guitar program to the preceding Saturday, the public will be able to enjoy both events.

This is the fifth year that Ke Kula Mele Hawaii has partnered with the Outrigger Enterprises Group and Waikiki Beach Walk to bring this steel guitar festival to Waikīkī as a part of the ongoing effort to preserve the island culture. "The steel guitar community is thrilled to be back at Waikiki Beach Walk to showcase what the Hawaiian steel guitar is all about," says Alan. "As interest in the steel guitar continues to grow, it is our pleasure and privilege to be able to share this wonderful instrument and gift to all who would like to learn."

CDs by the featured steel guitarists will also be available. For additional information about the festival, go to the festival's website at www.waikikisteelguitarfestival.com or check out the festival's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WaikikiSteelGuitarFestival. ■

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HSGA Donations

Thanks to all HSGA members who contributed to our General Fund and to our Scholarship Fund!

Special thanks to **Tony Fourcroy** of Fort Collins, Colorado for a generous \$100 donation to our Scholarship Fund. Tony is part of our team helping to organize our inaugural HSGA Festival in Ft. Collins. Mahalo nui loa, Tony!

The following members donated at least \$10:

- Bo Bahret, Cordova, TN
- Warren and Anita Barnes, Sacramento, CA
- Roger Ward, Sheffield, U.K.

First Look: The Alan Akaka Limited Edition Master Built 8-String Lap Steel

By Addison Ching

A steel guitar player once told me that steel guitarists often develop the “Steel Guitarist Disease.” Once a guitarist is infected, it is a lifelong ailment for which there is no cure. This disease involves collecting—no, accumulating—steel guitars of various vintages and models. How many have *you* acquired?

Swearing that I already have too many steel guitars in my personal collection, I became excited last New Year’s Eve when I learned of a collaboration between master steel guitarist Alan Akaka and renowned guitar luthier and manufacturer Bill Asher of

Asher Guitars and Lap Steels to create an “ultimate” lap steel guitar design. On further investigation, I learned that this guitar would be called the “Alan Akaka Limited Edition Master Built 8-string Lap Steel Guitar” and its production would be limited to a 50-instrument production run.

Specifications for the Asher-Akaka steel guitar claim that the instrument “produces a full, robust tone, has increased sustain, and superior playability.” According to the Asher press release, the use of EMG pickups to deliver crystal clear, super fat, low-end response will enable players to plug directly into an amp, P.A. or recording console. Hand-selected tone woods and a cylindrical tone-chambered body help create seemingly infinite sustain and wonderful overtones. The 24-inch scale length is optimal for intonation as well as supporting a variety of tuning options. This lap steel also offers a comfortable, slightly wider string spacing for easier finger-style play and precision.

Alan and Bill both contributed to the design of the instrument. My suggestions to add switchable tone caps, a built-in tuner, and both XLR and quarter-inch jack outputs were tabled because of incompatibility with the electronics envisioned for this steel. The steel’s body and neck will be mahogany with Hawaiian koa tops, ebony faceplates, and the fretboard will be inlaid with abalone symbols: the Asher hummingbird and piko fret markers. The symbolic *piko* (the Hawaiian term related to the navel or center that connects our ancestry), pays homage to the perpetuation and preservation of Hawaiian culture and music, which is paramount to Alan.

A departure from traditional Asher lap steel designs, the body bout of the Asher-Akaka limited edition will be



Builder Bill Asher at the factory working on one of the Asher-Akaka lap steels.

slightly narrower, in line with other popular lap steel designs by Canopus and Gibson. While a stand was not originally envisioned for this lap steel, Bill is collaborating with Mark Roeder of the Deluxe34 company (www.deluxe34.com) to develop a custom stand that will work with this steel. Initial reports indicate that the stand will fit inside the guitar’s hardshell case, making a complete transportable package.

While I initially resisted temptation, my wife encouraged me to “get into the queue.” So now the disease has once again struck, and I am anxiously awaiting the completion of this new toy. For those of you on Facebook, you can check the Asher Guitars and Lap Steels fan page to see the pictures Bill Asher has posted, chronicling the development and manufacture of this steel.

For those musicians who plan to travel with this instrument but are wary of airlines allowing instruments to be carried onboard, I will be working with Anvil Cases to design and manufacture

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The 2014 Rick Alexander Non-Pedal Sessions Report

By Jeff Strouse

This past March, we held the Fifth Annual Rick Alexander Non-Pedal Sessions at the Texas Steel Guitar Association (TSGA) jamboree in Dallas, Texas. Rick was the prior host and organizer, and each year we dedicate the show to his memory and our other steel guitar brothers who have passed on.

Thousands of people from all over the world gather for the TSGA event each year. The Non-Pedal Room is free and open for all to stop by and listen for as long as they like. Many people actually seem to stay all day, as we have so many great players to see.

This year's festivities began with the legendary Billy Robinson, who played on the Grand Ole Opry in the late 1940s backing the greats of the time such as Red Foley, George Morgan and Hank Williams. Billy played a few of the great oldies like "Candy Kisses" and "I Overlooked an Orchid" along with pretty pop tunes like "How High the Moon," "Tenderly" and "The Girl from Ipanema."

Billy was followed by Jim Evans, the founder and creator of Evans Amps. Jim started off with "San Antonio Rose" and many other country classics like "Mansion on the Hill," "Bonaparte's Retreat," "Walking After Midnight" and "Don't You Ever Get Tired Of Hurting Me" with guest vocalist Gina Davis.

Rose Sinclair from Austin, Texas played pop and swing standards like "Jersey Bounce," "The Nearness of You," "Body and Soul" and the Miles Davis jazz classic, "Four." Herb



John Ely (left) at his induction into the Texas Steel Guitar Hall of Fame in Dallas with president Albert Talley and DeWitt Scott.

Steiner, who also lives in Austin, gave us some very jazzy and swingin' versions of "The Birth of the Blues," "Rosetta," "Little Coquette," "All of Me," "At Sundown" and "I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me." Multi-instrumentalist Richard Wright played some tasty flugelhorn, which gave a nice brass element to blend with Herb's steel guitar jazz.

TSGA president Albert Talley, a former member of Bob Wills's band, played western swing with classics like "Secret Love," "Heart of a Clown," "I Love You Because" and "Faded Love," and his wife Debbie sang a beautiful version of the Patsy Cline hit "Crazy." Albert was followed by Tony Locke, who plays beautiful Hawaiian and jazz pop standards on a triple-neck Magnatone Maestro from the late '40s Hawaii Calls era. Tony played songs like "How D'Ya Do," "Honeysuckle Rose," "Autumn Leaves," "Sweet Sue" and "Rose Room." Tony's wife runs a hula troupe in Austin, so maybe we can get them to come visit us at HSGA sometime!

Dan Tyack played some soulful blues and rock and was joined by dobro virtuoso Randy Kohrs. We had dual steels and dobros, as Dan and Randy traded solos on some rockin' blues classics with vocals. Roger Edgington of San Antonio joined us for the first time this year and played "Across the Alley from the Alamo," "Stardust," "You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You" plus a beautiful version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

HSGA member John Lang (formerly a member of the 1970s hit group Gallery) plays a "super long scale" (26-inch) triple-neck Stringmaster, and started off with Santo and Johnny's "Sleepwalk," followed by swing classics like "On the Alamo," "Steelin' Home" and "Midnight in Amarillo." John also introduced Kristyn Harris, the Academy of Western Artists Female Performer of the Year! Kristyn brought the

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house down with “Sugar Moon,” “Waltz Across Texas,” “Blues for Dixie,” “Miss Molly” and more. She is also a champion yodeler. It was standing room only and we couldn’t squeeze another person in the room!

Friday night, we had our Non-Pedal Pizza Party, followed by a steel guitar seminar by John Ely. John’s a great teacher and it was very informative. It was in a Q&A format, so we were able to get John’s insight on various topics as well as a basic session on theory with handouts. On Saturday morning, John played an hour set of pure Hawaiian music, and we were all mesmerized by his playing on island favorites like “The Hukilau Song,” “Pohai Kealoha,” “My Yellow Ginger Lei,” “Tropical Swing” and “Two Shadows on the Sand.” If you closed your eyes, you thought you were in Hawaii! John Ely deserves a big round of applause, because at this year’s convention he was inducted into the Texas Steel Guitar Hall of Fame! He also played a set on the main stage, including renditions of “Coconut Grove,” “Getting Sentimental Over You,” “I Love You So Much It Hurts” and “Under the Double Eagle.”

Margie Mays was up next and she played her D-8 Excel, which was once played by Jerry Byrd! She dazzled the audience with “Just Doodlin’,” “Hana,” “Aloha Beloved,” “Blue Hawaii” and “Beyond the Reef.” HSGA Board member Ivan



At the 2011 Non-Pedal Sessions, Cindy Cashdollar (left), Billy Robinson, Steve Alcott on bass and singer Red Kilby.

Reddington continued the Hawaiian morning with “Lei Momi,” “Rose of Waikiki,” “My Hawaiian Summer Rose,” and “Coconut Grove.” Ivan also helped out by playing rhythm guitar on some sets.

Continued on Page 20



Deluxe 34

Lap Steel Stands

see more at
www.Deluxe34.com

phone 262.728.2686

Yesterday

(Lennon – McCartney)

Ballad

Arrangement by John Ely

Vs

Chords: D, F#7, Bm, G, A7

Yes-ter-day, _____ all my trou-bles seemed so far a-way _____ Now it looks as though they're

Steel Gtr. (C6th) let ring and slide all- - - - |

5 Chords: D, F#7, Bm7, E7, G, D

here to stay Oh, I be-lieve in yes-ter-day, Sud-den-ly, _____

let ring- - - - | let ring- - - - | l.r. - - - - |

9 Chords: F#7, Bm, G, A7, D, F#7

_____ I'm not half the man I used to be _____ There's a sha-dow hang-ing o-ver me. Oh,

l.r. - - - - |

13 Chords: Bm7, E7, G, D, Br, F#7sus, F#7, Bm, A, G

yes-ter-day came sud-den-ly, _____ Why she had to go I don't

let ring- - - - | (for a pro version, play like bar 19)

17 A7 D F#7sus F#7 Bm7 A G

know she would - n't say I said some - thing wrong, now I

T 9 7 7 2 0 0 7 9 10 9 7

A 7 2 7 10

B 9 2 7 6

(to simplify, play like bar 15)

21 A7 D F#7

long for yes - ter - day, Yes - ter - day, love was such an eas - y

T 9 7 9 10 2 0 0 6 7 9 10

A 7 9 9 7 2 2 2 1 6 8

B 9 2 2 2 6 7 6 7

let ring-----

25 Bm G A7 D F#7 Bm7 E7

game to play Now I need a place to hide a - way Oh, I be - lieve in

T 9 7 7 7 2 2 0 2 2 2 4

A 9 7 7 7 7 2 2 1 2 2 2

B 7 7 7 9 7 9 7 7 2 2 2 4 4 4 4

l.r.-----

29 G D Tag D E7 G D

yes - ter - day. Hm

T 2 2 14 14 14 14

A 7 2 2 14 14 16 16 19 14 14

B 7 7 14 14 16 16 19 16 19

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

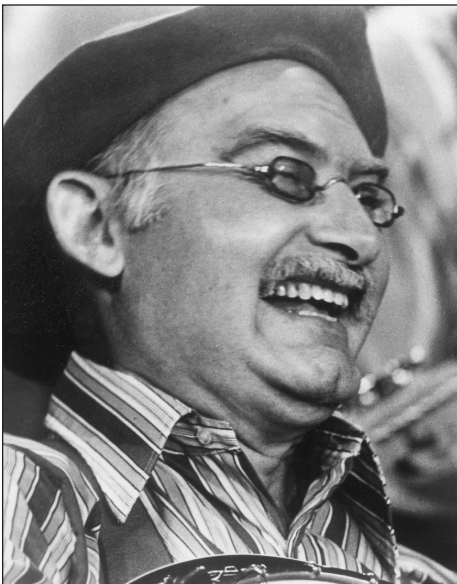
Including Byrd's Other Studio Work from November to December 1949

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 also mention the substantial Cincinnati studio work Byrd plied from early 1949 through the beginning of 1950, with the current segment focusing on Byrd's work in November and December 1949.)

Jerry Byrd and Ernie 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 studio work in Nashville (backing Ernest Tubb, Red Foley, and young Hank Williams) and Lee assuming a position at Cincinnati's WLW radio (which included regular appear-

Grandpa Jones in his later "Hee Haw" years.



ances on WLW's "Midwestern Hayride" program).

Byrd and Lee recorded together for a second time in December 1947 when Byrd joined a quartet backing Lee on eight RCA sides. (By this time, Byrd was accompanying 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 televised incarnation of "Midwestern Hayride."

From the early spring through early fall 1949, Byrd backed Rex Allen, Daisy Mae Arnette & Old Brother Charlie, Pete Cassell, Kenny Roberts, Hank Williams, Red Kirk and "Midwestern Hayride" songstress Judy Perkins at the Herzog facility. At the King Studios northeast of downtown Cincinnati, Byrd backed banjoist-comedian Louis Marshall Jones (aka Grandpa Jones of "Hee Haw" fame).

On the Fourth of July, Jerry's wife Thelma gave birth to the Byrds' first child, Lani Jo, in Cincinnati.

Sometime in October, Byrd—backed by Louis Innis's String Dusters—recorded his next two sides as a featured soloist, the instrumentals "Wabash Wah-Wah Blues" and "Steelin' the Chimes". Byrd also joined the String Dusters for their waxing of Innis's blues-based tune "She's Mean to Me," supplying a striking solo with surprising rhythmic shifts and unexpected chords.

November brought Byrd more studio work. On the fourth of the month, he functioned as a member of a quartet backing country/pop vocalist Cowboy Copas and Grandpa Jones at Cincinnati's King Studios. (By 1946, tenor-voiced Copas had become one of



Cowboy Copas, whom Byrd backed on two King sides in November 1949, a fine, often overlooked singer, now more remembered for dying in Patsy Cline's plane crash.

America's biggest country stars.) Copas and Jones waxed two sides; the second, "The Feudin' Boogie," was a harmonica-laden sixteen-bar blues which lampooned Jones's "advanced age" (he had actually just turned thirty-six). On the recording, the two stars alternate vocal choruses, with the fifth chorus given over to a Byrd steel break. Byrd appropriately exploits the "bluesy" lowered third scale degree in his solo.

Byrd had a very active December. On the first of the month, he backed Clyde Moody and his Woodchoppers on four sides at a King session in Cincinnati. North Carolina-born Moody had played guitar in string band and bluegrass groups (including Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys) before embarking on a solo vocal career in 1944.

Moody's session opened with a cover of Fred Rose's "Afraid." Byrd had backed Rex Allen's recording of the soaring tune some nine months earlier (as described in the fall 2013 issue). On Allen's recording, Byrd had

supplied a sixteen-bar break; here, he plays unobtrusive fills while Moody's fiddler and electric guitarist take their turn in the spotlight.

Moody next recorded "I Love You Because" (written by Leon Payne, the blind songwriter who composed "You Can't Pick a Rose in December," which Ernie Lee recorded with Byrd as a member of his backing band in February 1949, as related in the Summer 2013 issue). Here, Byrd shares a thirty-two-bar break with Moody's fiddler and electric guitarist. Mercury released "I Love You Because" in early 1950, coupled with "Afraid" as the "B" side. The January 14, 1950 issue of *Billboard* showed scant love for "I Love You Because," dismissing the side as an "undistinguished hill ballad ... [given] a prosaically-adequate vocal and instrumental rendition." Nonetheless, the recording reached #8 on the country charts, providing Moody with his third (and final) chart hit.

Byrd next backed Moody on "Tears on My Pillow," a tale of betrayal-induced insomnia written roughly nine years earlier by Gene Autry and Fred Rose. (Autry had recorded the song

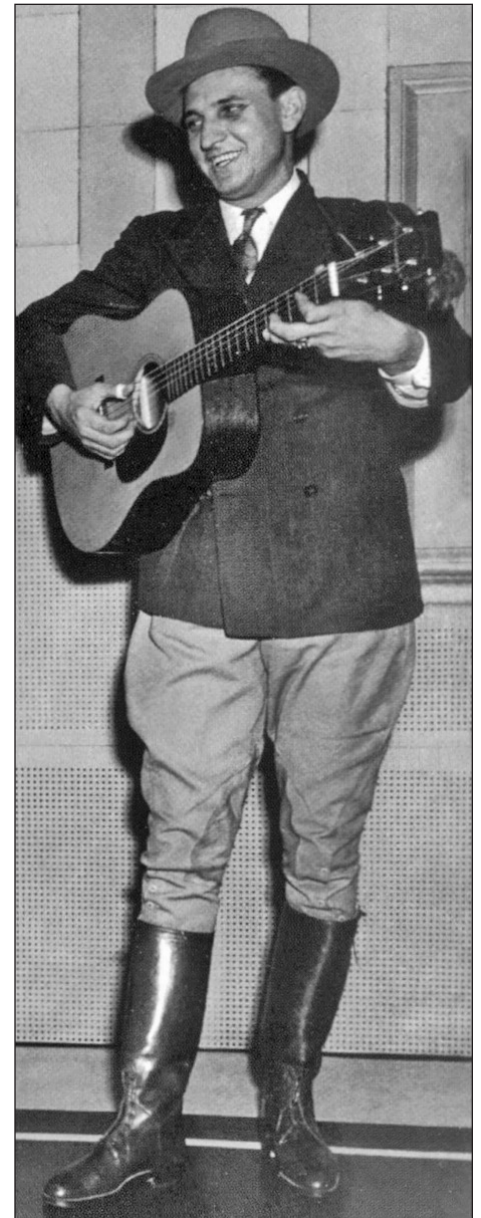
back in August 1940 with Frank Marvin on steel guitar.) On Moody's cover, Byrd lays out until around the twenty-fifth bar, so his ensuing fills strike the listener as a bit of a surprise. Elsewhere on the recording, Byrd plays a mellow-sounding, thirty-two-bar break.

Moody's session concluded with the pleasant tune "The Angels Must Have Cried Last Night," on which Byrd played prominent steel fills and a sixteen-bar solo.

On a separate December recording date—at the Herzog studios most likely—Byrd joined the String Dusters in backing Red Kirk and Judy Perkins on a second Mercury duet, "Fairy Tales," during which Byrd shared soloing duties with Tommy Jackson. (Kirk and Perkins's previous collaboration, "I Wonder Who We Think We're Foolin'" was described in the winter issue.) The duo also waxed solo sides with the String Dusters, with Kirk recording Harry Edelstein & Bell Palmer's fine "weeper" "It's Raining in my Heart," which featured Byrd responding to Kirk's vocals during the "head" and offering a sweet, Hawaiian-sounding break.

Byrd joined Perkins on her second (and final) String Dusters side, a cover of the melodious 1941 song "I Wish I Had a Sweetheart (Like That Old Sweetheart of Mine)." Jimmie Davis had made a country recording of the tune in late 1941, with Vaughn Horton on steel guitar. On Perkins's cover, Byrd offered a four-bar introduction and a mellow-sounding break in the middle register of his steel.

In a November 5, 2014 e-mail to the author, Ernie Lee's cousin Joe Fothergill remarked—after hearing a YouTube posting of "I Wish I Had a Sweetheart"—that the recording could be considered "a lesson in steel guitar playing by Jerry, especially the chimes" (which Byrd exploits towards the end of the recording), adding that "Judy's singing blends in so well with him" (a statement with which the author wholeheartedly agrees).



A 1940 photo of Bill Monroe's guitarist Clyde Moody, whom Byrd backed on four King sides in December 1949.



A 1950 photo of Judy Perkins, whom Byrd backed on one Mercury side in late 1949.

From what the author can glean, Byrd apparently next recorded a week or so later (perhaps on December 10, to infer from countrydiscography.blogspot.com), at a "marathon" day of recording in Chicago for Mercury at the new Universal Recording Corporation, then located on the top floor the Civic Opera House on Wacker Drive. During a full day in the studio, Byrd recorded two more sides as a featured soloist with Louis Innis's String Dusters, "Steel

Continued on Page 14

Guitar Rag” and “Panhandle Rag.” Byrd also backed Rex Allen and His Arizona Wranglers, Allen with the String Dusters, Allen and pop songstress Patti Page with Allen’s Arizona Wranglers and, finally, two more sides with just Allen and his Wranglers.

In *Doowop: The Chicago Scene*, Robert Pruter provides some background on the founding of Universal Recording, drawn in part from an interview with former studio employee Art Sheridan. Sheridan related that two of Universal Recording’s founders, Bill Putnam and Bernie Clapper, had been stationed in the Civic Opera building during World War II while serving in the U. S. Army’s communications division. As such, “they knew all the wiring and electrical connections in the building, and after the war [they] opened a studio there.” Sheridan added that Putnam and Clapper “rented a penthouse for the recording studio adjacent to the ladies washroom.”

Byrd’s long day of recording commenced with “Steel Guitar Rag” and “Panhandle Rag,” two tunes associated with Leon McAuliffe (former longtime steel guitarist with Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys). McAuliffe first re-

corded the Black-blues-derived “Steel Guitar Rag” with Wills’s Playboys back in fall 1936. Circa twelve-and-a-half years later, McAuliffe waxed “Panhandle Rag” for the first time at his initial recording session for Columbia.

Byrd’s “Steel Guitar Rag” rendition was a showoff vehicle for himself as well as String Dusters bassist Red Turner. As steel guitarist (and former Jerry Byrd Fan Club secretary) Ray Montee insightfully remarked on YouTube in May 2013, “Byrd is the only instrumental I’ve heard that played [i.e., recorded] three different choruses of [“Steel Guitar Rag”] without ever duplicating any of it.” On “Panhandle Rag,” the breaks for fiddle, electric guitar, and saxophone on McAuliffe’s original recording were replaced with Byrd steel guitar soloing.

Byrd next backed Rex Allen and his Arizona Wranglers on two sides, “No More” (which was not issued) and “I Gotta Have My Baby Back,” an attractive tune in 1920s “throwback” style by Texas-born singer-songwriter Floyd Tillman (1914-2003). On Tillman’s song, Byrd provided a four-bar introduction and—in keeping with the 1920s “ambiance”—supplied a rather sweet, Hawaiian-sounding sixteen-bar



“The Singing Rage, Miss Patti Page,” who recorded four Mercury sides with Rex Allen, his Arizona Wranglers, and the String Dusters in December 1949. (Byrd played on two of these sides.)

break. The February 4, 1950 issue of *Billboard* described the recording as “fine mood-warbling [i.e., crooning] of the country blues-ballad,” adding that “Allen is persuasively mellow.”

Byrd then participated on two String Dusters sides on which Allen provided vocals—a recording of O. B. Adams’s soaring “Bandera Waltz” and Louie Innis’s wittily worded Byrd tribute “Steelin’ Is His Business” (the latter sung to a melody invented by Byrd). On “Bandera Waltz,” two Byrd steel solos frame a Tommy Jackson fiddle break. In a review of “Steelin’,” the February 4, 1950 *Billboard*—lauding Byrd as “a kingpin country plectrum picker”—acknowledged his prominent steel, with “Rex Allen sing[ing] bass alongside,” predicting that the recording “could go places.”

Next, Byrd participated in a session in which the late pop songstress Patti Page joined Rex Allen for several duets with backing by Allen’s Arizona Wranglers and the String Dusters. (Oklahoma-born Page—who by this point had had five hits on the pop charts but

(Left) The 45 rpm issue of Byrd and the String Dusters’ “Steel Guitar Rag,” which despite Mercury’s label credits, actually began life as a Sylvester Weaver creation, “Guitar Rag.” (Right) Released as the “flip side” of “Steel Guitar Rag,” Byrd and the String Dusters’ cover of Leon McAuliffe’s “Panhandle Rag.” (From the author’s personal collection)



only one on the country charts—was then trying to increase her “hillbilly” chart presence.) Allen and Page’s sides included two hymns, apparently sans Byrd. Byrd, however, is clearly heard on “Tag Along,” a rather weak tune on which he shares an intro and outro with the Arizona Wranglers’ guitarist and contributes some mid-song “boo-wah” effects via tone control knob manipulation. The February 4, 1950 issue of *Billboard* offered somewhat faint praise for the recording, opining that “Mercury’s top thrush [Page] and country warbler [Allen] blend well on an innocuous ballad.”

Byrd is also clearly heard on Herbert and Stryker’s quirky but quite tuneful waltz “Broken Down Merry-Go-Round (inexplicably “hidden away” as the “B” side to “Tag Along”). Here, Byrd echoes Allen and Page’s vocals in call-and-response fashion and plays a sixteen-bar break. The February 4, 1950 *Billboard* appropriately praised the side as “a real appealing pop-country duet.” Unfortunately, neither of the sides Page recorded with Allen cracked the Top 40 on the country charts.

Byrd closed out his full day of recording by accompanying Rex Allen on two sides with his Arizona Wranglers (minus Patti Page), “A Petal From a Faded Rose” and a cover of Tex Ow-

ens’s fast, yodeling country waltz from 1934, “Cattle Call” (which Eddie Arnold would soon make famous via a spring 1955 recording).

On “A Petal From a Faded Rose”—a tuneful but sad collaboration assembled by Merle Travis and Leon Rusk roughly three years earlier—Byrd plays a four-bar intro and an appropriately doleful-sounding eight-bar break. In a review of the recording in its February 4, 1950 issue, *Billboard* remarked that “Allen warbles prettily on yet another rose[-themed] tune.”

Robert Pruter relates in *Doowop: The Chicago Scene* that Universal Recording was famous as the site of the first “echo chamber”; Byrd’s final recording with Rex Allen and his Arizona Rangers made use of this new technology. In Art Sheridan’s interview with Pruter, Sheridan recalled that Bill Puntam and Bernie Clapper “developed the first echo chamber by putting a microphone and a receiver in the [adjacent] ladies washroom, which was that old-type tile [washroom with] ... great resonance.” Sheridan added that “while we were doing a session we put a guard outside so that nobody would come in and flush the toilet.”

On “Cattle Call”—a song featuring plenty of high-register yodeling—Allen’s yodels were recorded in the



Rex Allen, whom Byrd accompanied on four solo Mercury sides in December 1949.

washroom-come-echo-chamber, then dubbed into the main recording. Byrd sprinkles harmonics over Allen’s yodels and provides a sixteen-bar break and a four-bar final “tag.”

Despite all the echo-chamber-related work, “Cattle Call” was, strangely, never released as a single, although the track did appear on Mercury’s 1955 “extended playing” 45 rpm release *Rex Allen* (EP-1-3111), along with three other recordings.

Thanks to Ray Montee for his January 26, 2014 post on the Steel Guitar Forum (bb.steelguitarforum.com), confirming Byrd’s use of the “boo-wah” effect on “Tag Along.” Dave Sichak’s hillbillymusic.com website again proved helpful for sorting out “A” and “B” sides of the recordings cited.

Next, we conclude the series with a look at Byrd and Lee’s activities through early 1950, including Byrd’s backing of Bob Eaton’s recording of Ricky Riddle’s “Second-Hand Heart” (a song Lee also recorded) and Lee’s hosting of the NBC radio network’s “Faultless Starch Time” program, with Byrd in his Pleasant Valley Boys backing band. ■

(Left) The 78 rpm issue of Byrd and the String Dusters’ “Steelin’ is His Business” with vocals by Rex Allen. (Right) The 78 rpm issue of “Broken Down Merry-Go-Round,” a joint effort by Rex Allen, Patti Page, Allen’s Arizona Wranglers, and Jerry Byrd in December 1949.



Maui Steel Festival Report

By Addison Ching

This year's Maui Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival, held during the weekend of April 11-13, 2014, was enjoyed by Kā'anapali Beach Hotel guests, Maui residents and visitors from all parts of the world. This year's festival featured many professional steel guitarists—from Hawai'i, Alan Akaka (with his group The Islanders), Jeff Au Hoy, Ross Ka'a'a, Joel Katz, Ed Punua (appearing with his dad Victor Punua), Owana Salazar, Greg Sardinha (with his band including Gigi Takaki and Ben Vegas), and Geri Valdriz; from Japan, Kanika Pila and Kiyoshi "Lion" Kobayashi; and from the U.S. mainland, Tony Locke from Austin, Texas and Patti Maxine from Santa Cruz, California. Once again, the Arts Education for Children Group (AECG) collaborated with the Kā'anapali Beach Hotel and the Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian Music to produce steel guitar performances, classroom presentations, and musical and cultural workshops.

The festival included open stage sessions on Friday and Saturday. Steel players from around the world shared their talents with the enthusiastic audience, including Ron Carter from New Zealand, Kanika Pila and Shinichi & Kumiko Kakiuchi from Japan, Joerg Schubert from Germany, Dave "DK" Kolars from Illinois, Tony Locke from Texas, Chuck Hughes from Colorado, Jozef Smith from California, Jack Aldrich from Washington State and Ralph Czitrom from New Jersey [ED: one of our newer members who proves it's never too late to take up the steel guitar and play it well]. Two different evening *ho'olaule'a* programs were held on Friday and Saturday with different artists and programs featured each night. Each night was capped off with a *kanikapila* jam session where anyone could bring an instrument and play along with the scheduled festival performers. The world-famous Kā'anapali Beach Hotel's Sunday brunch featured entertainment by Greg Sardinha and friends, The Hawaiian Serenaders (Mele Fong and Richard Tom) and Alan Akaka and friends.

SteelRadio, an Internet broadcast website (www.SteelRadio.com), originally intended to record the entire



At the Maui Steel Festival Saturday open stage sessions, the steel guitar class from U.H. Maui College: Instructor Joel Katz (left) with students Leihuanani Kerr, Elaine Olson and Louise Lambert.

concert for marathon broadcasts in May. However, a last-minute decision was made by SteelRadio's Michael Scott to broadcast the entire festival live. SteelRadio's hostess Debbie Conner presided over the entire three-day event, which reached a worldwide audience via the Internet. At one sampling, there were more than 148,000 listeners in 104 countries and over the Armed Forces Radio Network.

Once again the festival included educational presentations at local schools to make students and staff aware of the Hawaiian steel guitar and to encourage interest in the instrument. These presentations are vital for the preservation and perpetuation of the Hawaiian steel guitar. The educational theme was continued on the open stage with performances by students of three Hawaiian steel guitar schools: Lion Kobayashi's Tokyo-based Steel Guitar Orchestra, Joel Katz's U.H. Maui College steel guitar class (see our cover story in the Winter 2013-14 issue) and Alan Akaka's Ke Kula Mele Hawai'i School of Hawaiian Music with students from Hawai'i, Japan and California.

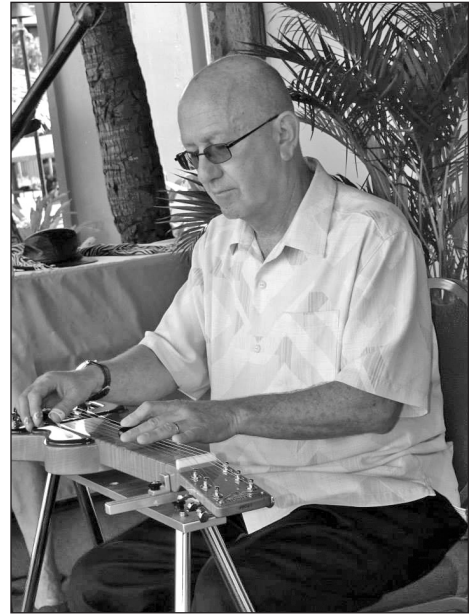
This year's expanded workshops included Lei-Making, Hula, Steel Guitar Instruction (Alan Akaka), 'Ukulele Instruction (Mele Fong), Recording Tips (Greg Sardinha), Hawaiian Songs and Slack Key (Owana Salazar), Technique Ideas and More (Tony Locke), and Hawaiian Style Singing (Pomaika'i Lyman).

For more pictures and video of this year's festival, visit the festival website at www.mauisteelguitarfestival.com. Next year's festival will be held on April 24-26, 2015 at the Kā'anapali Beach Hotel. This will immediately precede our club's biennial Honolulu Convention so steel guitar enthusiasts have an opportunity to enjoy both events along with the traditional May Day festivities in Honolulu. ■

Treasurer's Report

(as of March 31, 2014)

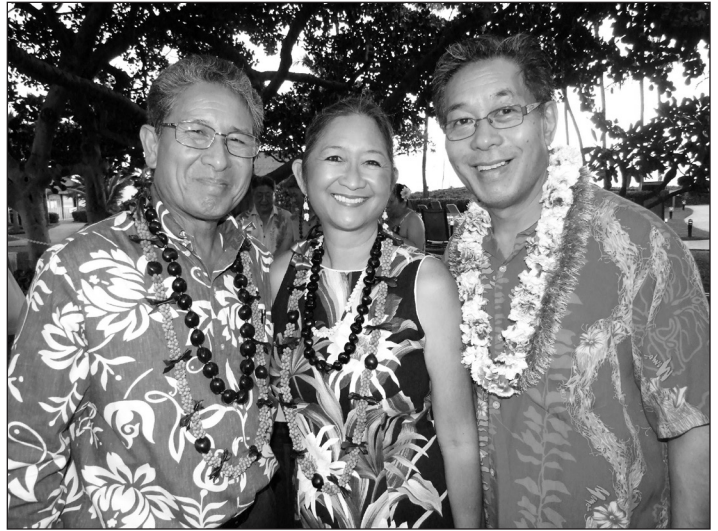
General Fund	\$7,414.58
Scholarship Fund	\$14,697.53
O'ahu Credit Union CD	\$25,186.70
Japan Account	\$2,211.19
Grand Total	\$49,510.00



Maui Fest Photos

Something for everyone at this year's Maui Steel Guitar Festival! (Clockwise from upper left) At the Friday Ho'olaule'a, Geri Valdriz on steel with Kaipo Asing and Owana Salazar on her frypan; at the open stage session, Ralph Czitrom from New Jersey; "Lion" Kobayashi (front center) with his Steel Guitar Orchestra; At the Friday jam session, Chuck Hughes; and at the Friday Ho'olaule'a, Yoshiyuki Endo with Gary Aiko on backup. (Photos courtesy of Colleen Ricci.)





More Maui Photos

(Clockwise from upper left) Maui Mahalo fundraiser honoree, Senator Daniel Akaka, with Yuki Lee Sugimura; Alan Akaka (right) with his brother Daniel, Jr. and Danny's wife Anna; select steel guitar students of Alan's Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian Music: (l. to r.) Lilikalani Punua, Michiko Akaka, Dave "DK" Kolars, Addison Ching, Kibata Tomoko, and Gale Warsawsky; and Alan's "Next Gen" students Mālie Lyman, Keen Ching and Alexis Tolentino. (Photos courtesy of Colleen Ricci.)



CLOSING NOTES

Catherine M. Kostrzewski (1918-2014)

We just received the sad news at press time about the passing of Kay Koster, longtime HSGA member and favorite performer at our annual Joliet conventions. We recently did a long feature article on her life and many accomplishments, which included the Jerry Byrd Lifetime Achievement Award presented to her last year by the Steel Guitar Hall of Fame. We were fortunate that she was feeling well enough to do the interview for the article, and we were glad to learn how much she enjoyed seeing it all in print.

We reprint here excerpts from the obituary posted at the Olson Funeral Home website. [ED: Many HSGA members and friends posted condolences and remembrances there. Very interesting and heart-warming to read through if you have a moment.]

“Kay M. Koster, 95, of Rockford, was born Catherine Edana Marie Kostrzewski on June 5, 1918, in Peshtigo, Wisconsin to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kostrzewski. She was a graduate of Peshtigo High School where she served as her 1936 class president. Kay was the first girl scout leader in Peshtigo.

“She worked at Badger Paper Mill for five years while studying piano and music theory with Miss Anna Papon of the Leipzig Conservatory of Music in Germany. She taught guitar lessons at the Honolulu Conservatory of Music in Marinette, Wisconsin, and later had a radio show on station WMAM in Marinette-Menominee. She eventually bought the Honolulu Conservatory of Music in 1941.

“In 1945 she closed her businesses in Marinette and moved to Beloit, Wisconsin where she worked for Voigt Music Centers in Beloit, Elgin, and Rockford. She wrote all the music arrangements for all three Voigt centers and later became the manager of the Rockford branch of Voigt Music.

“In 1956 Kay opened Koster Guitar Center on 7th Street in Rockford. The center employed ten guitar teachers and taught 350 students per week. Her students attended guitar competitions in Buffalo, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Chicago to name a few. They would travel by chartered bus, train or parent car caravans.

“During this time, Kay commuted to Chicago for four years and studied at Modern Guitar Studios, which later merged with De Paul University.

“Kay was known for her excellent guitar repair. For over sixty years, Kay played professionally for dances and various occasions for ethnic clubs including, Swedish, Italian, Polish, Lithuanian clubs, country clubs and parades. She demonstrated Fender, Gibson, and National guitars at Home Shows. She was a [longtime] judge at guitar competitions for Harry Stanley’s Oahu Publishing Company in Cleveland, for the State of Iowa guitar contests, and for the Boddicker chain of 14 studios in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines.



Kay Koster with one of her many groups making appearances nearly every weekend for 50 years. She always took her steel guitar along.

“She was a member of the Aloha International Steel Guitar Club (AISGC) since 1975, the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association since 1985, the musicians union from 1940-1980, the American Guild of Music since 1946, the Aloha Dream in Brecon, Wales since 2000, and the Eagles Club since 1946. She was visitation chairman for the Rockford Ostomy Club for over 10 years and a member of St. James Catholic Church in Rockford since 1950.

“Kay played at the AISGC conventions in Winchester, Indiana for 35 years and the HSGA conventions in Joliet, Illinois for 25 years. She had an authentic Hawaiian group, complete with hula girls, called the Aloha Islanders from 1940-2002.

“In 1962 Kay traveled to Hawaii and had the honor to play Hawaiian music with native Hawaiian bands at the Hawaiian Village in Honolulu, the Maui Palms on Maui, and the Kona Inn and King Kamehameha’s Kona Beach Hotel on the Big Island.

“In August 2013, Kay received the coveted Jerry Byrd Lifetime Achievement Award during the 42nd International Steel Guitar Convention in St. Louis, Missouri...”

I know the many HSGA members who knew and loved Kay will join us with a heartfelt *Aloha a hui hou* (until we meet again). ■

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E Komo Mai! Welcome, New Members

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DOUGLAS LAURICE, 207A N. Cloverdale Blvd., Cloverdale, CA 95425
LOREN DEPPING, 2355 D St. NE, Salem, OR 97301
ROBERT BEARD, 136-A Kahako Street, Kailua, HI 96734

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Netherlands



Asher-Akaka steels in the production line.

NON-PEDAL SESSION REPORT Continued from Page 9

HSGA member Sharon Denney entertained us with a mixture of Hawaiian and country songs, including “Little Coquette,” “Down Yonder,” “Harbor Lights” “Pennsylvania Polka” and “That’s the Hawaiian in Me.” Linda Wright who played in Las Vegas for many years, played “Time Changes Everything,” “Tennessee Waltz,” “Remington Ride,” “Take the ‘A’ Train” and “Westphalia Waltz.”

Folk and acoustic music was well represented by Canadian musician Bob Blair, who played a Benoit Weissenborn. He and his brother Rick sang great two-part harmony in a mixture of original and popular songs. Bob started off with a medley he put together of Anglican hymns. which was done *a cappella* style to great effect, followed by “The Water’s Wide,” “Darcy Farrow,” “Sunny’s Dream” and “Summer Wages.”

All in all, it was a great show. We had an excellent backup band to support our artists. Our primary goal is the preservation and encouragement of non-pedal steel guitar. Admission is free to our event, so stop by and enjoy the music, as we celebrate the roots of steel guitar next year at the TSGA Jamboree on March 12-15, 2015! ■

JAPAN CONVENTION PREVIEW Continued from Page 3

Admission for the convention is 5000 yen per person which applies to both performers and audience members. Attendance for the convention should be somewhere around 60, consisting mostly of friends and family of the performers. And we are expecting HSGA member Kris Oka from San Francisco as well as other visitors from the U.S. and other countries. ■

ASHER-AKAKA Continued from Page 7

an ATA flight case [ED: a case that meets current airline packaging standards] for the Asher-Akaka lap steel and stand that can be checked as luggage.

A final interesting note: Bill Asher’s mother is none other than Elizabeth Montgomery, best known for her starring role in the TV series “Bewitched.” ■

It’s Dues Time Again!

HSGA’s membership year begins on July 1, 2014. Your membership is up for renewal if the mailing label on your newsletter envelope shows “X 6/14” next to your address. Mahalo!

At the 2012 Japan Convention, the Nā Kanaka band with Kuniharu Yamamoto on his 12-string pedal steel, Kohei Makino, Yoshi Okano, Hideaki Takahashi, Masa Abe and Yahiko Machimura.

