

HSGA QUARTERLY

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by the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association

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Playing a recent show in Hawai'i, Jeff Au Hoy, this year's Honored Guest at Fort Collins.

Fort Collins, Here We Come!

By Chris Kennison

Aloha, all. Fall is here and soon we will be gathering in Fort Collins for our yearly festival! We are looking forward to seeing y'all on October 23-25 here in the Mountain West.

Guest Artist and Headliner

We are looking forward to Jeff Au Hoy's first appearance as our festival Guest Artist. Jeff is one of the brightest of the new steel guitar "faces" in the Islands and definitely has that soft Hawaiian touch. And we will have Lyons, Colorado native Sally Van Meter as our other headliner for the Saturday night concert at the historic Rialto Theatre in Loveland, Colorado. The show will feature Jeff and Sally,

and it should be an amazing evening of music. [ED: We are including Sally Van Meter's bio at the end of this article. Refer to the Winter 2013-14 newsletter for Jeff Au Hoy's bio.]

Steel Guitars in Concert

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. Each player will have 20 minutes to perform and 10 minutes to get on and off stage. Times may change depending on how many folks sign up. Sign up early because spots are filling

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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 editor at johnely@hawaiiansteel.com.

FORT COLLINS *Continued from Page 1*

up. The playing schedule will be posted on our website by October 1 with the names we have received at that point.

“Talk Story” with Jeff Au Hoy

Don't forget. After dinner on Thursday we'll have our popular “Talk Story” session with Honored Guest Jeff Au Hoy. You'll get Jeff's take on the Hawaiian steel guitar and you'll have the chance to ask “burning” questions you have on anything steel guitar. Don't miss it!

Reservations Reminder

You can make your weekend festival pass reservations online at the HSGA website (www.hsga.org). Click on the festival link and go to the festival page and use the BrownPaperTickets link to purchase your \$45 festival pass. Then scroll down a bit and make your Hilton hotel reservations. Of course, some have mailed in their weekend ticket reservations on the forms included in the last couple of newsletters, and you can do that.

To book a hotel room you must use the online reservations link on our website 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. The Hilton has almost sold out our block of festival rooms, so make your reservation soon to get the reduced rate!

Transportation

If you don't want to rent a car and drive 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). 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 the same reservation pays only \$20. So a

couple would pay \$53 one way, three people would pay \$73, and so on. They will take you from DIA (Denver International Airport) to the hotel. Numerous other shuttles are in service out of DIA, too.

Seminars and Vendors

Saturday we will again have our popular seminars, free to weekend pass holders or anyone who walks in and pays the daily ticket price of \$20. We have some exciting seminars planned. They will not run concurrently this year, so if you want to attend them all, you can.

On Saturday morning, Chris Kennison will offer a beginning C6th steel seminar. Stuart Yoshida will teach a basic 'ukulele seminar. Stuart lives in Ft. Collins and is the creator of the Ooktown Podcasts and online uke teaching site “Ooktown” (www.ooktown.com). Then in the afternoon, Gerald Ross will lead an advanced uke workshop, followed by Chuck Lettes teaching some expanded C6th techniques. Chuck is a well known pedal steel master who lives in Denver, but he excels on his frypan!

We expect to have some vendors as well. The RAM guitar folks from Illinois plan to be here, and of course, John Hatton will be running his “store” of steel guitar products and supplies. We will also have a local luthier and a guitar case company.

Saturday Headliner, Sally Van Meter

Since 1977, Sally Van Meter's slide and steel guitar work has gained respect and recognition among peers and audiences for her commitment to playing music with heart and soul. She is well known for her performances and recordings ranging from solo work to collaborations with artists such as Jerry Garcia, Chris Hillman, Led Kaapana, Cyril Pahinui, Jerry Douglas, Mary Chapin-Carpenter, Alison Brown, Taj Mahal, Gerry O'Beirne, Peter Rowan and the Rowan Brothers, Yonder Mountain String Band, Tony Rice,

Kathy Kallick, the Nashville Bluegrass Band, Maura O'Connell, and Leftover Salmon.

Sally's work on *The Great Dobro Sessions*, produced by Jerry Douglas and Tut Taylor for the Sugar Hill label, earned the 1994 Grammy Award certificate for Best Bluegrass Recording as a featured performer. In addition, Sally's solo album *All In Good Time* was a finalist for the IBMA (International Bluegrass Music Association) Instrumental Album of the Year. Film, television and radio credits include the film *Gather at the River*, the celebrated CBS series *Northern Exposure* and TNN's *Texas Connection*. Sally has also been invited to perform for nationally acclaimed NPR show "A Prairie Home Companion" and Nick Forster's popular NPR radio show, "E-Town."

In 1995, Sally joined David Grisman and Jerry Garcia for a special project,

The Songs of Jimmie Rodgers—A Tribute produced by Bob Dylan for Columbia Records. From 1977-1996, Sally was a member of the Good Ol' Persons, a much-beloved San Francisco-based band. She has been an IBMA finalist for Dobro Player of the Year from 1990-1997 and in 1996 won IBMA awards for Best Instrumental Recording and Recorded Event of the Year (*The Great Dobro Sessions*). For over three decades, Sally's musical journeys have taken her from the U.S. to the U.K., Europe and Japan.

These days Sally resides in Colorado. Alongside touring, Sally is an independent filmmaker, and you can find her wearing her "record producer's hat" for national touring acts such as the Yonder Mountain String Band and the Open Road Bluegrass Band. In addition, Sally's love of teaching music has made her a mainstay at festivals,

music workshops and camps throughout the U.S., U.K. and Europe. ■

2014-2015 Dues Alert

This is your FINAL issue if your newsletter mailing label still shows "X 6/14" next to your address. Annual dues are \$30, which includes First Class delivery (Air Mail delivery for overseas addresses). Renew today! Don't miss out on the latest info on Hawaiian steel guitar, including news, instruction, and lots of photos. Mahalo!

Fort Collins Schedule

Wednesday, October 22

Check into the hotel, set up, talk story, have dinner, sleep, or jam!

Thursday, October 23

9:00-12:00 Steel Guitars in Concert
12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)
1:00-4:00 Steel Guitars in Concert
4:00-8:30 Dinner (on your own)
8:30-9:30 Talk Story with Jeff Au Hoy.
"No-sleep" jam follows.

Friday, October 24

9:00-12:00 Steel Guitars in Concert
12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)
1:00-4:00 Steel Guitars in Concert
4:00-8:30 Dinner (on your own)
8:30-???? Free night. Jam. Relax.

Saturday, October 25

Main Room

9:00-12:00 Steel Guitars in Concert
12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)
1:00-4:30 Steel Guitars in Concert
5:00-7:00 Dinner (on your own)

Legends Room Workshops

9:00-10:00 Beginning C6th Steel
10:00-11:00 Beginning 'Ukulele
1:00-2:00 Intermediate-Adv. 'Ukulele
2:00-3:00 Intermediate-Adv. C6th Steel

Saturday Night Concert

7:30 Rialto Theatre, Loveland, CO

Seminar Offerings

Beginning Hawaiian Steel (C6th)

This starting-from-scratch C6th steel guitar workshop will cover the basics: using the bar, basic blocking (muting) and how to play chords. Bring your steel, picks, bar and a small amplifier. *Instructor: Chris Kennison.*

Intermediate-Advanced Steel (C6th)

This seminar covers more advanced C6th steel guitar techniques and styles. *Instructor: local steel master Chuck Lettes.*

Beginning 'Ukulele

This intro class focuses on the basics of left and right hand technique. Bring your uke! *Instructor: Stuart Yoshida.*

Intermediate-Advanced 'Ukulele

Add spice to your 'ukulele playing with new chord forms, rhythms and styles. *Instructor: Gerald Ross.*



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The Fifth Annual Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival

By Auntie Gale Warshawsky and Kumu Alan Akaka

On a sunny day the beautiful sounds of Hawaiian music filled the air, featuring the signature sweet sounds of the Hawaiian steel guitar at the Fifth Annual Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival held this past July 19 from 3-7 PM. Large crowds sat on chairs and on beach mats on the grass to enjoy the music. The annual festival is supported by the Waikiki Beach Walk, Outrigger Enterprises Group, Kia Enterprises, and Alan Akaka's Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian Music.

Different at this year's festival was the wide range of ages represented on stage when it was Ke Kula Mele's turn to perform. Ke Kula Mele's haumāna (students) featured children to teenagers to adult performers. At the festival in prior years Ke Kula Mele's haumāna featured the youngsters, aka the Next Generation steel players. This year's festival gave Ke Kula Mele's haumāna of all ages an opportunity to perform.

The audience was treated to many steel guitar artists at this free annual festival. Greg Sardinha opened the festival in typical fashion, covering a variety of styles including "Ho'omalimali," "Kona Hema," "I Want to be Hawaiian," "Puka in Kalihi," "I Can't Help Falling in Love," and "Hawaiian Vamp/I'm Pau." Eddie Palama followed with "Mapuana," "Dream of Old Hawaii," "In Your Hawaiian Way," "He Aloha No'o Honolulu," "Breeze," "In a Little

Hula Heaven" and "Chloe." He invited Jimmy Wong, a longtime friend and haumāna of Ke Kula Mele, to perform together in a duet of "Blue Hawaiian Moonlight." Jimmy was featured in a *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* article promoting the festival and is one of many mākua (adults) haumāna at Ke Kula Mele.

The haumāna of Ke Kula Mele performed next under the artful direction of Kumu Alan Akaka. Performances included an ensemble rendering of "Ka Wai A'o Namolokama" featuring the mākua: Henry Wassman, Sharon Sawdey, Dennis Isa, Luana Macariola, Bob Beard, Don Armstrong and Robert Antonio. Steel guitar solo performances followed, including "Malihini Mele" (Bob Beard), "Mele Lāna'i" (Mālie Lyman), "Lani Ku'uipo" (Sid Pang), "E Naughty Naughty Mai Nei" (Keen Ching), "Adventures in Paradise" (Alexis Tolentino) and "Kohala March" (Quincy Maka'awa'awa). The steel guitar haumāna were backed up by the Ke Kula Mele Ensemble musicians, consisting of haumāna of various ages: Alexis Tolentino, Gale Warshawsky, Keen Ching, Sid Pang and Quincy Maka'awa'awa on 'ukulele; Alan Akaka and Keala Akaka on guitar; and Zach Pang on bass.

Owana Salazar took the stage next and performed "Kaulana 'O Hilo Hanakahi," "Kou Aloha Mau A Mau," "Ho'i Mai," "How'd Ya Do," "Sand," "Silhouette Hula" and "On a Little Street in Singapore." Bobby Ingano followed with nahenahe (soft, sweet) versions of "Kaula 'Ili," "Hanohano Hanalei," "Nā Pua Lei 'Ilima," "Hula Blues," "Sleepwalk," and "Kāwika Slack Key."

Alan Akaka closed the solo performance portion of the show with "12th Street Rag," "Pagan Love Song," "At the

Ke Kula Mele students of all ages showing their stuff at this year's festival: (Front row) steel guitarists Dennis Isa, Luana Macariola, Sharon Sawdey, Bob Beard, Henry Wassman III, Donald Armstrong and Robert Antonio. (Back row) Zack Pang, Quincy Maka'awa'awa, Sid Pang, Keen Ching, Kumu Alan Akaka, Gale Warshawsky, Alexis Tolentino and Keala Akaka. (Photo courtesy of Colleen Ricci)



Coco Palms,” “Maui Medley,” the often requested “Whispering Lullaby,” and “Unforgettable,” which was ably sung by Gary Aiko.

The festival concluded with a jam session featuring festival musicians trading choruses on “Waikiki Chickadee” and “Hawaiian War Chant.”

Providing expert backup throughout the festival were Gigi Takaki (guitar), Kaipō Asing (guitar and bass), and Gary Aiko (bass).

A marvelous display of vintage steel guitars belonging to Alan Akaka was set up under a canopy so festival goers could see them up close.

A festival store was available for attendees to purchase CDs by the various artists who performed.

The Fifth Annual Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival covered lots of ground featuring young and old, seasoned pros, up-and-coming players and tomorrow’s pros. It was a fabulous experience for the haumāna of Ke Kula Mele, sharing their love of playing Hawaiian music. They are fortunate to have Kumu Akaka to teach them, guide them and help them to realize their dreams of playing the Hawaiian steel guitar, ‘ukulele, Hawaiian style bass, and guitar.

All in all, it was a great day for Hawaiian music featuring the sweet sounds of the Hawaiian steel guitar. And this year’s addition of Ke Kula Mele adult students proved that you are never too old to learn to play the steel guitar! ■



HSGA member and vibes man, Wim Zweekhorst (left), aka Bill Baker, with his new band Bill and his Hawaiians from Holland.

New Hawaiian Band in The Netherlands!

By Wim Zweekhorst (aka Bill Baker)

Born and raised in the time when everybody listened to the radio and when television had not been invented yet, I became acquainted with big bands, small combos and Hawaiian music. I have been playing the saxophone now for 52 years and 27 years ago formed my own group “Bill Baker’s Big Band.”

Through a dear friend I became the proud owner of a vibraphone, and after quite a few lessons I was eager to start a Hawaiian band. The model I aspired to was the famous Dutch group “The Kilima Hawaiians” led by Bill Buysman.

Every band has its own motto and mine is that good dance music should feature a healthy share of up tempo numbers, inviting people to come to the dance floor immediately. Bearing this in mind Rob de Kiewit and I founded the “Bill and his Hawaiians” band, and we have been lucky to find very experienced musicians from the Hawaiian scene to participate.

Right now we are working on a show to perform in theaters. We plan to feature Indonesian music and country & western music like the Kilima Hawaiians used to do.

At the moment we are the sixth Hawaiian band in Holland compared to 600 in the ‘40s and ‘50s! Our aim is to start a revival of Hawaiian music, and we rehearse every week with great enthusiasm. Hopefully we will be given the opportunity to do our show in the U.K. as well. ■

Please Contact Us!

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The Alfred Aholo Apaka Story

Special thanks to Michael Cord for giving us permission to reprint here Harry B. Soria's terrific liner notes for the 2010 Hana Ola release, "Alfred Aholo Apaka, Hawaii's Golden Voice" (see our review on page 16). Harry B. gives a detailed account of Apaka's life and career, which holds special interest for HSGAers because of the great steelmen who performed and recorded with Alfred Apaka during his short career. Here is historian Harry B. Soria:

In the two centuries since Hawaiians received contact from the outside world, Hawaii's music has evolved as a reflection of each new non-Hawaiian musical trend to reach her shores. At the same time, traditional Hawaiian music has been lovingly passed on from generation to generation, preserving Hawaii's rich cultural heritage.

Early growth of Hawaiian music's worldwide popularity was built through the dedication of its musicians, singers,

Alfred Apaka from his days playing bass and singing with a combo during the five o'clock early evening "cocktail" slot at the Alexander Young hotel in 1938.



The Don McDiarmid Orchestra on the lawn of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, with Diamond Head in the background: (Back row) a very young Benny Kalama on bass, ??, steel guitarist Sammy "Makia" Chong, bandleader Don McDiarmid, David Kaumehelwa, ??, Henry Allen and ??. Front row: Alfred Apaka (left), George Kruze, Henry Spencer and ??. (The unidentified musicians pictured were horn players with the band.)

and dancers. The recording, radio, movie, television, and visitor industries all embraced the music. Both visitors to Hawaii and her residents alike revered the brightest stars of the Hawaiian entertainment scene.

None of those stars has done more to popularize the music he loved so passionately than "Hawaii's Golden Baritone," Alfred Apaka. His voice expressed the romance and enchantment of Hawaii as no one else's ever has.

Alfred Aiu Afat was born in Honolulu on March 19, 1919 of Hawaiian, Chinese and Portuguese decent. He was the only son of Mary Aholo and Alfred Aiu Afat, Sr., but he had five loving sisters: Elizabeth, Frances, Idamae, Lydia, and Mary Lois. A chubby lad, Alfred, Jr. attended Hanahauoli Preschool, Aliiolani Grade School, and Roosevelt High School. The family moved to Molokai in 1929 while their father operated a trucking business, but returned to Honolulu after two years.

Young Alfred enjoyed swimming and surfing at Waikiki, and playing his

ukulele. Roosevelt High, an "English Standard School" named for President Theodore Roosevelt, opened at 1120 Nehoa Street in the Makiki District in September 1930. While Alfred was a student at Roosevelt, the handsome 5-foot 11-inch, 190-pounder excelled in sports. He played tackle for the "Roughriders" football team and hurled shot put for the track squad. He also served as Cadet Captain of the school's military ROTC program.

Alfred listened attentively whenever his aunt, Tutu Aholo, gave singing lessons to his father. In 1933, he sang tenor in a Mormon Church choir and won many inter-Island contest honors singing with a mixed quartet. He also played string bass and ukulele. As a senior at Roosevelt in 1938, he served as emcee for the school carnival.

Don McDiarmid, Sr. had become the orchestra leader at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. He was searching for a new vocalist to feature at the "Pink Palace" bandstand that faced the ocean. Seven young men were assembled to audition.

Alfred sang Harry Owens's composition, "To You Sweetheart, Aloha." Benny Kalama, string bass player and arranger for the Don McDiarmid Orchestra, whispered to McDiarmid, "That's the boy." Alfred had immediately hit the big time, earning \$30 a week singing at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Benny Kalama would become a lifelong friend of Alfred's, playing an integral part in his musical career. Matson Hotels owned both the Royal Hawaiian Hotel and the Waialae Golf Course and Country Club. As a result, McDiarmid's orchestra would alternate between the two locations, playing at the Royal on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings, and at Waialae on Tuesday and Friday evenings. So it was that while Alfred's Roosevelt High School classmates enjoyed their graduation dance at the Waialae Country Club, he was on the Waialae club's stage working with the Don McDiarmid Orchestra.

Alfred began playing with another group during the 5 PM cocktail hour at the Alexander Young Hotel at Bishop Street, between King and Hotel Streets in downtown Honolulu. A popular female vocalist, Leolani Blaisdell, fronted the group, which featured Jake Carter on guitar, Sam Kaaa on steel guitar, Bill Lee on ukulele, and Alfred on string bass and vocals. Leolani Blaisdell was also a featured vocalist later in the evening with the Gigi Royce and the Young Hotel Rooftop Garden Orchestra.

Ray Kinney was a Hawaiian music success story in 1940. He and his orchestra, the Hawaiian Musical Ambassadors, were the house band at the Hawaiian Room in the Hotel Lexington in New York City, the premier showroom for Hawaiian music in the U.S. since its grand opening on June 23, 1937. One could dine, watch the floor show, and dance amid the supper club's Hawaiian setting. During his second return to Hawaii from New York, Ray hired Alfred as featured vocalist at the Lexington.

Alfred Aiu Afat, Jr.'s name went through a dramatic transformation. It would undergo a popular process transposing Hawaiian consonants for non-Hawaiian letters, and adding appropriate Hawaiian vowels. The "f" in Afat would become a "p," while the "t" in Afat would become a "k." Since no Hawaiian word can end with a consonant, an "a" was added to the end. The resulting name was "Apaka." Alfred's maternal [grandmother's] name "Aholo" became his middle name. He would legally change his name to "Alfred Aholo Apaka" and his father would eventually follow suit. [ED: This "nugget" from Harry B. just before press time: Apaka's maternal grandmother (on his Hawaiian side) was Lydia Aholo, one of the first women graduates of Kamehameha Schools, with connections to the last Royal court.]

Alfred and his first wife, Diane, sailed for the mainland in March of 1940 with Ray Kinney and his musicians. Ray had gathered some new Hawaiian song sheets while in Honolulu for a Decca recording session in Hollywood,

California. One of the resulting 78 rpm discs, Decca 3447A, featured Ray singing "Ululani," his own composition for one of his daughters. Kinney decided on a hapa-haole song then popular in Honolulu for Alfred Apaka's recording debut on the B-side of the disc. "Hawaii's Charm," with words by Harry Soria, Sr. and music by Dick Gump, was the first record with Alfred Apaka's name on the label.

Alfred performed at the Hotel Lexington through the outbreak of World War II. He would also be featured as soloist on several of the recordings made by Ray Kinney on Decca and Victor during this pre-war period. Rejected from military service for "first degree flat feet," he toured the country for eight months with a production of *Hellzapoppin*. No longer married, he returned to Hawaii in 1943 to rejoin the Don McDiarmid Orchestra at the Kewalo Inn, at 1016 Ala Moana Boulevard, as a string bass player and vocalist.

In 1944, he formed his own band for the first time. His 10-piece group played Jimmy Walker's "La Hula Rhumba" at 744 Lunalilo Street until June of 1947. During this time, he was asked to record with Randy Oness' Select Hawaiian Serenaders, a combo assembled specifically for recording two separate 78rpm four-disc albums for the Bell Record Company of Honolulu. Randy Oness' Select Hawaiian Serenaders featured Alvin Kaleolani Isaacs on guitar, Pua Almeida on steel guitar and guitar, "Buddy" Peterson on string bass, "Steppy" De Rego on steel guitar and guitar, Randy Oness on clarinet and ukulele, and Alfred Apaka on vocals. Of the 16 sides recorded, Alfred is featured as soloist on five of them. (These are the five opening tracks of the CD

Continued on Page 8



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Alfred Aholo Apaka, Hawaii's Golden Voice—see our review on page 16).

The Bell Records studio was a former military warehouse in an area known as “Base Yard 6,” located at Date and La‘au Streets across the Ala Wai Canal from Waikiki. Between 1944 and 1950, Bell Records recorded and released an enormous catalog of Hawaiian music. The label assembled a star studded stable of Hawaii’s professional musicians and entertainers—the absolute cream of the industry! Practically every star of every showroom, lounge, and nightclub in the Waikiki showbiz scene recorded on “Bell.”

In 1945, Alfred married Edna Blake, a young female vocalist with the Don McDiarmid Orchestra. Their only son, Jeffery Aholo Apaka, was born on June 22, 1946. Their marriage would last until 1959.

After appearing as a guest vocalist on the “Hawaii Calls” nationwide Mutual radio program in the spring of 1947, Alfred was asked to become a member of the show’s house band, Al Kealoha Perry and the Singing Surfriders in September of the same year. “Hawaii Calls” broadcast each Saturday, most often from the Banyan Court of the Moana Hotel at Waikiki Beach. Al Kealoha Perry and the Singing Surfriders featured leader Al Kealoha Perry, with Simeon Bright on guitar, Andy Bright on guitar, John “Squeeze” Kamana on ukulele, Bob Kauahikaua on background vocals, Frank “Mystery” Cockett on string bass, and David Keli‘i on steel guitar. The Waikiki Girls, Marion Kanekapolei Guerrero Diamond, Lila Kauloku Guerrero Replinger, and Eloise Gasper Holt were also featured as vocalists. The two featured vocal soloists were Haleloki Kahauoiopua and Alfred Aholo Apaka. The group made 28 recordings for the Aloha Recording Company in 1948. Alfred is featured as soloist on some of them. (Two of these



Alfred Apaka and his Village Men, the group that played the Tapa Room of the Kaiser Hawaiian Village beginning in September 1955: Alfred Apaka (left); (back row) bassist Jimmy Kaopuiki, David Kupele, Pauline Isaacs; (middle) famed steel guitarist Jules Ah See; (front) percussionist “Pappy” Bowman, Benny Kalama and Iolani Luahine.

sides are included on the *Hawaii’s Golden Voice* CD).

The Aloha Recording Company recorded in the Kamehameha Schools Alumni Clubhouse at 2290 Liliha in Pu‘unui. The living room of the clubhouse, the former Lincoln L. McCandless mansion, had a wooden floor and a high ceiling. This translated into an extremely “live” sound on the recordings. The cast would assemble there after work to first rehearse, and then record in the relative quiet of the Hawaiian evening.

In 1949, Alfred formed another group for an engagement at the Moana Hotel. Alfred Apaka and his Hawaiians featured “Steppy” De Rego on guitar and Tommy Castro on steel guitar. The group recorded ten sides for the Bell Record Company. Benny Kalama is featured as an arranger and on the high harmony parts in the background vocals. (Nine of these sides are included on the *Hawaii’s Golden Voice* CD).

Alfred Apaka’s star was now rising. His rugged good looks and his natural, masculine voice were coming into their prime. The world was noticing. Popular local radio disc jockey, J. Akuhead Pupule, recorded Alfred Apaka and his Moana Serenaders on his own “Aku” Records ... and played them on the local airwaves constantly. Alfred Apaka began making records soon after for Decca Records, initially with Danny Stewart and his Islanders in 1950. Alfred began a gig at “Don the Beachcomber” located at 2318 Kalakaua Avenue in Waikiki, where he was “discovered” by Bob Hope in 1952. On April 26, 1952, Alfred Apaka sang on the comedian’s national television show, “The Bob Hope Show.” He would eventually appear on three television shows. In May of 1952, Alfred appeared on Bob Hope’s NBC radio show with Dorothy Lamour, followed by an appearance on Bing Crosby’s radio show.

In a relatively short period of time, the world had discovered this handsome Hawaiian with the golden baritone. He toured the mainland circuit again until he was called home by industrialist and developer Henry J. Kaiser to open at the new Kaiser Hawaiian Village Hotel at 2005 Kalia Road in Waikiki. On September 15, 1955, Alfred Apaka and his Village Men opened in the Tapa Room of the Kaiser Hawaiian Village. Fittingly, the musical director was Benny Kalama, the man who helped Alfred get his very first professional job in 1938. The cast of the original Tapa Room show featured Alfred Apaka on vocals, Jimmy Kaopuiki on string bass, Jules Ah See on steel guitar, Pappy Bowman on percussion and drums, David Kupele on guitar, and Benny Kalama on ukulele. Pauline Isaacs danced modern auwana hula, while lolani Luahine performed ancient kahiko hula. During this period, Alfred recorded LPs for Decca, Capitol, and ABC Records. He also recorded for Henry J. Kaiser's label, Hawaiian Village Records.

On January 30, 1960, Alfred was playing paddle ball with friends K. Hyun and Ken Akahiji in the Central YMCA at 401 Atkinson Drive in Honolulu. Alfred collapsed on the court and was pronounced dead at 11:25 AM. Alfred Apaka was only 40 years old. His shocking death came at the peak

of an exploding career. A TV pilot project starring Alfred had just been sold to a sponsor, assuring him of national television exposure. Alfred Apaka appeared to be on the verge of becoming a worldwide phenomenon. He is buried in the shadow of Diamond Head with a microphone in his hands and some of the memorable lyrics he sang engraved in marble above him.

"Hawaii's Golden Baritone" was gone but not forgotten. He did not read music and had no formal training but he had commanding stage presence and possessed a voice that could range from B-flat to E with incredible agility. He was a consummate balladeer who must be credited as a major factor in the popularization of Hawaiian music for two decades. ■

Treasurer's Report

(as of August 31, 2014)

General Fund	\$7,246.33
Scholarship Fund	\$14,727.53
O'ahu Credit Union CD	\$25,073.82
Japan Account	\$1,514.00
Grand Total	\$48,561.68



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I'll Weave A Lei Of Stars For You

(R. Alex Anderson – Jack Owens)

Arrangement by John Ely

Ballad

Intro

Chords: G_{m7} C₇(b₉) F F⁰ G_{m7} C₇(#₅)

I'll

Steel Gtr. (C6th)

E			9	10	10	0	0	1	2	3	4
C	11	12	9	10	10	1	1	0			4
A	11	12	9	10		1	1	0			3
G			9	10					2	3	
E											
C											

Vs

Chords: F E₇ F A_{m7}

weave a lei of stars for you To wear on

T	2			8	8			4	3		
A		3		3		5	5			2	
B						5	5			2	

10 Chords: A^{b0} C₇ G_{m7} F⁰ C₇

nights like this, Each time you wear my lei of stars

T	3	0		2		2		3	8	8	7
A	5	0		3		3		3			7
B	5										


16 Chords: A₇ D_{m7} G₇ C₇

I'll greet you with a kiss, The

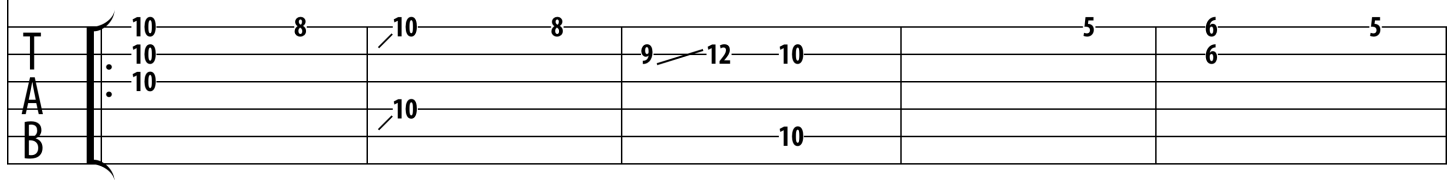
T	9	5	5	10	12	12
A		5	5		12	
B	9			10	12	12

Br

C_{m7} F₇ B^b D₇(^{#5})

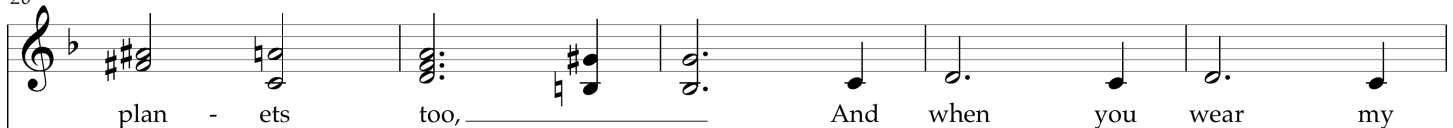


moon is green with jeal - ou - sy And all the

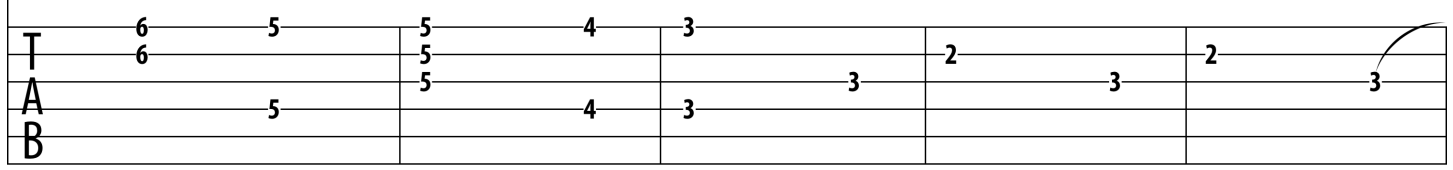


26

G₇ C₇ F E₇




plan - ets too, And when you wear my

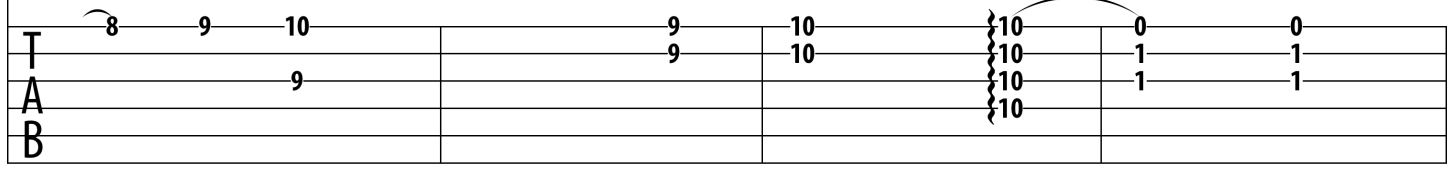


31

F D₇ G_{m7} C₇

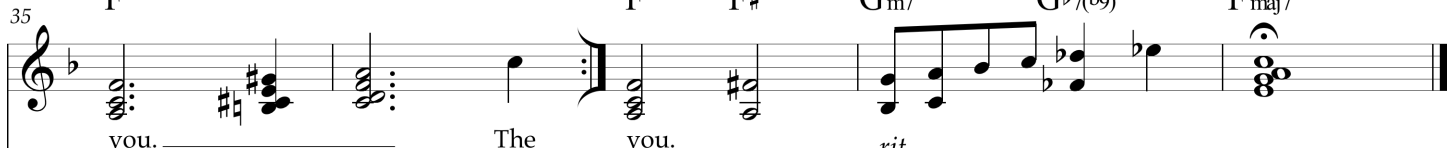


lei of stars The fair - est one is

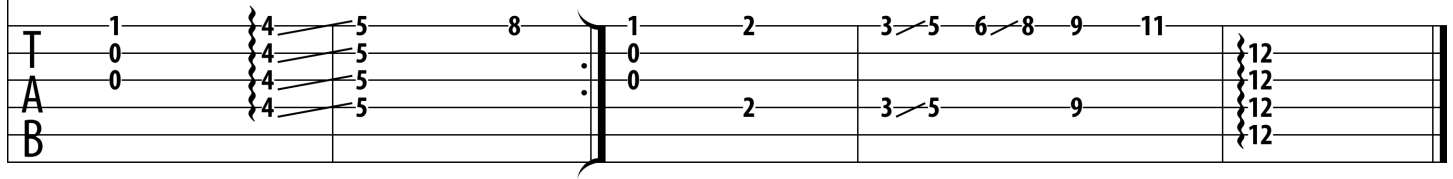


35

1. F 2. F F^{#0} G_{m7} G^{b7}(b9) F_{maj7}



you. The you. rit.



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

Including Byrd's other recording activities in early January 1950

By Anthony Lis

This installment completes the discussion of the seventeen RCA Victor sides on which Jerry Byrd helped back Kentucky-born country music singer Ernie Cornelison (aka Ernie Lee), recorded between 1947 and 1950 in Chicago and Atlanta.

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 studio work in Nashville while Lee joined the cast of Cincinnati's "Midwestern Hayride" radio program, broadcast on WLW.

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 backing Red Foley on his weekly "Grand Ole Opry" appearances as a member of his Cumberland Valley Boys. In October 1948, Byrd joined Lee in Cincinnati when Foley's backing band was hired away by WLW (and re-christened the Pleasant Valley Boys) 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.

Between late February and early July, Byrd became ensconced in Cincinnati's then-thriving recording scene, waxing his first four sides as a featured soloist ("Steelin' the Blues," "Drowsy Waters," "Moonland," and



An apparent promotional photo of the "Faultless Starch Time" cast, circa 1949. (Top row), Judy Perkins and Ernie Lee; (Bottom row, left to right) Zeke Turner, Jerry Byrd with his famous 6-string Rick, Red Turner and Louis Innis. (Photo courtesy of Joe Fothergill)

"Byrd's Boogie") for Mercury at the city's Herzog Studios, backed by Louie Innis's String Dusters (Mercury's rechristening of the Pleasant Valley Boys). At the Herzog facility, Byrd also backed Rex Allen, Daisy Mae Arnett & Old Brother Charlie, Pete Cassell, and Kenny Roberts, while at the King Studios to the northeast, he accompanied Grandpa Jones.

On the Fourth of July, Jerry's wife Thelma gave birth to the Byrds' first child, Lani Jo. In the wake of Lani Jo's birth, Byrd became a near fixture at the Herzog Studios, backing Rex Allen, Kenny Roberts, and Red Kirk there again, as well as Hank Williams and "Midwestern Hayride" songstress Judy Perkins.

Sometime in October, Byrd, backed by Louis Innis's String Dusters, recorded two more sides as a featured soloist at the Herzog facility, the "wah-wah"- and echo-effect-laden "Wabash Wah-Wah Blues" and the harmonics-filled "Steelin' the Chimes."

The preceding installment (in the Spring 2014 issue) detailed Byrd's activities during the last two months of 1949. In November, Byrd backed

Cowboy Copas and Grandpa Jones on two duets at Cincinnati's King Studios. In early December, Byrd backed Clyde Moody, Red Kirk, and Judy Perkins at the Herzog facility. Around December 10, Byrd traveled to Chicago for a full day of recording at the Universal Recording Corporation, backing Rex Allen and pop songstress Patti Page on two duets, as well as Allen on two solo sides. Byrd also recorded a good half-dozen numbers involving the String Dusters, including covers of Leon McAuliffe's "Steel Guitar Rag" and "Panhandle Rag," as well as Louie Innis's Byrd tribute "Steelin' is His Business," sung by Rex Allen.

- - - - -

While Byrd was busy recording, Ernie Lee was amassing fame as a radio personality via his "Midwestern Hayride" appearances on Cincinnati's powerful 50,000-watt WLW. With the assistance of Dave Sichak (webmaster of the hillbilly-music.com website), the author learned of nine references to Lee in the bimonthly *National Hillbilly News* between January and September 1949, as well as a full-page spread devoted to Lee in the first (1949) volume of

Thurston Moore's Cincinnati-produced *Hillbilly and Western Scrap Book*. Lee was also becoming known on the touring circuit: an April 2, 1949 article in the *Portsmouth Times* (in Portsmouth, Ohio, 105 miles southeast of Cincinnati) stated that Lee was coming to town with a touring version of the "Midwestern Hayride," (which presumably also included Byrd playing steel).

By the time of his Portsmouth appearance, Lee was also busy hosting the weekly NBC radio network variety program "Faultless Starch Time," sponsored by the Kansas City-based Faultless Starch Company. The program, which originated in the WLW studios, ran for fifteen minutes beginning at 11 AM Eastern time on Sunday. "Faultless Starch Time" had debuted back on October 10, 1948, with Lee sharing vocal duties with Judy Perkins. The two were originally backed by WLW's white gospel group, the Brown's Ferry Four, consisting of Alton and Rabon Delmore (who had begun their career as the Delmore Brothers), Grandpa Jones, and Merle Travis. Sometime after Byrd's October 1948 arrival in Cincinnati, Byrd and the Pleasant Valley Boys took over the accompanying duties on the program.

Judy Perkins related in a June 22, 2013 phone interview with the author that "Faultless Starch Time" was broadcast live, and that all rehearsing was done the morning of the broadcast. Happily, the May 15, 1949 program survives on transcription disc. Byrd opens the broadcast by playing a slow, ascending glissando on his steel which leads into the "Faultless Starch Theme" ("You don't have to cook it, that good old Faultless Starch"), sung by Lee and Perkins. During the five-song program, Byrd plays high-register counter-melodies during the singers' renditions of the current hit "Tennessee Border," two tunes popularized by Gene Autry ("The Bible on the Table and the Flag Upon the Wall" and "After Tomorrow"), and Fred Rose's "Deep Water." On the

Ernie and Jean Lee's 1949 residence at 930 Barry Lane, North Avondale, Cincinnati, Ohio. (As listed in Williams' 1949 Cincinnati Directory of Householders)



Jerry and Thelma Byrd's 1949 residence at 2768 Queen City Avenue, apartment #1, Westwood, Cincinnati, Ohio. (As listed in Williams' Cincinnati Directory)

bouncy, cleverly rhyming "Big Blue Eyes" (a song of undetermined authorship), Byrd engages in call-and-response with Lee during the first two choruses.

Lee would continue hosting "Faultless Starch Time" until sometime in 1952. Presumably, Byrd remained Lee's steel player on the program until his late autumn 1951 return to Nashville. Moore's *Hillbilly and Western Scrap Book* relayed that Lee was also hosting "Ernie Lee's Omega Show," a half-hour program which aired Sunday afternoons on some sixty-odd Mutual Broadcasting System stations in the South.

By mid-June 1949, Lee had moved from a narrow, three-story house in the northeast part of Cincinnati proper to a two-story, three-bedroom bungalow on Barry Lane in the North Avondale area of the city's more residential northeast outskirts. (The bungalow still stands.) Byrd, meanwhile, was living with Thelma and, after July 4, newborn Lani Jo on the opposite side of Cincinnati in the city's Westwood neighborhood. Their first-floor apartment in a newly completed two-story buff brick unit was located on Queen City Avenue, a major West End thoroughfare. (This residence likewise still stands.)

Lee continued touring with WLW troupes during the summer of 1949. The *Billboard* issue of July 16, 1949 related that Lee, Judy Perkins, and the Swanee River Boys quartet (with Jerry Byrd, presumably) had recently appeared at the Hillbilly Park country music entertainment park near Newark, Ohio, circa 160 miles northeast of Cincinnati.

Jerry Byrd opened 1950 with another recording session at Cincinnati's Herzog Studios, backing recent Decca signee Bob Eaton on January 4. The January 21, 1950 issue of

Continued on Page 14

Billboard reported that Tennessee-born Eaton, then circa age 23, “has just inked with Decca [and] has joined WSM, Nashville, as a boy singer.” Postings by former Jerry Byrd Fan Club secretary Ray Montee on the Steel Guitar Forum website (bb.steel-guitarforum.com) from June 2000 and October 2005 alerted the author to Byrd’s participation in Eaton’s session. Neither Michel Ruppli’s *The Decca Labels: A Discography* nor Prague-Frank’s Czech Republic-based website (countrydiscography.blogspot.com) provide any information about the other backing musicians.

The author was able to obtain a copy of Decca’s 78 rpm *demo* coupling of the first and last sides Eaton waxed at his four-song session, “Somebody’s Stealin’ My Baby’s Sugar” and “Second-Hand Heart.” (The coupling was released to the general public by late February 1950.) The double-entendre-laden “Somebody’s Stealin’ My Baby’s Sugar” was written by Vic J. McAlpin, a staff composer at Nashville’s Acuff/Rose publishing company. With Eaton sounding very much the young “boy singer,” his delivery of lines such as “you’d better pray like revival day, or brother, you’re checkin’



1969 photo of Ricky Riddle, circa age 49.



An early photo of guitar legend Chet Atkins.

out” and “tomorrow will be your funeral day if you don’t leave my sugar alone” strike a modern-day listener as rather unconvincing.

Byrd’s fine steel playing on “Second Hand Heart” salvages the side, with Byrd providing a four-bar intro as well as two breaks. The first break, which Byrd shares with the electric guitarist, features Byrd playing a sixteen-bar solo in mainly parallel motion, suffused with some rather striking chromatic chords. The balance of the side features Byrd providing inventive fills during the frequent rests in Eaton’s vocal line.

“Second-Hand Heart” proved to be a better match for Eaton’s vocal timbre. The song—a tuneful number referencing a “heart bruised in the door of love”—had been written in 1945 by Alvin Doyle (“Ricky”) Riddle (1920-1988). Riddle, an Arkansas-born vocalist, had moved with his family to the Detroit area with the onset of the Great Depression. After serving with the Navy in World War II, Riddle returned to Detroit proper in 1946. Perhaps Jerry Byrd interacted with him during his final months in the city playing WJR’s “Goodwill Frolic Barn Dance” program. Riddle eventually moved to Nashville, where by 1950 he was managing a nightclub.

Byrd takes a similarly prominent role on “Second-Hand Heart,” providing a four-bar intro and two-bar outro, as well as a thickly-chord-laden sixteen-bar break. During the first verse/chorus, Byrd provides unobtrusive chordal fills. In the second verse/chorus, these fills expand into full-fledged countermelodies nicely complementing Eaton’s vocal line.

Riddle himself had recorded “Second-Hand Heart” (with “Somebody’s Stealin’ My Baby’s Sugar” as the “B” side) in Nashville in late 1949 or early 1950, with the Hal Bradley Band.

(Left) Decca demo disc of Bob Eaton’s recording of Vic McAlpin’s “Somebody’s Stealin’ My Baby’s Sugar.” (Right) Demo disc of Eaton’s recording of Ricky Riddle’s “Second-Hand Heart.” (From the author’s personal collection)



Billboard, in a January 28, 1950 review, remarked that “Second Hand Heart” “has the makings” (i.e., a potential for profit). Other acts covering “Second-Hand Heart” in early 1950 included Ernie Lee (as will be seen below), Houston vocalist/bassist Benny Leaders, and the Casanova Boys.

To infer from an April 5, 2014 Ray Montee posting on the Steel Guitar Forum, Byrd also backed Bob Eaton on his other two January 4 recordings, “I’m Saving My Mother’s Wedding Ring For You” (written by “big band” bandleader Teddy Powell with Ray Smith), which the February 18, 1950 edition of *Billboard* dismissed as “a strictly-from-formula song,” and “If I Could Write a Love Song” (written by Cincinnati-born songwriter/pianist Cliff Friend), which *Billboard* deemed “a simple, unaffected ballad.”

Exactly two weeks after Byrd backed Bob Eaton, Ernie Lee recorded his last four RCA sides, in Chicago. RCA’s session sheet for the recordings (#024-1185), which the author examined at the Country Music Hall of Fame’s archives in May 2012, shows the sides were recorded on January 18 at RCA’s Studio A, located in the company’s branch offices on Lake Shore Drive, during a three-and-a-half-hour session running from 9:30 AM until 1 PM. The session sheet lists five backing musicians—Kenneth (“Jethro”) Burns on mandolin, Henry (“Homer”) Hayes and Chet Atkins on guitar (with Atkins actually plying *electric* guitar), Dave M. Bohme on violin, and James Palacek on bass. Burns and Hayes—who by early 1950 were becoming known for their “hill-billy” send-ups of popular songs—had overlapped with Byrd and Lee on the “Renfro Valley Barn Dance” program beginning in 1939, and also backed Lee at his previous RCA ses-



Ernie Lee on the set of the “Good Day” show, WTTV-TV, Tampa (from the mid-1960s?). (Photo courtesy of Joe Fothergill)

sion in Atlanta. Bohme and Palacek were Chicago-area musicians who had participated in Lee’s previous Windy City RCA session in December 1947.

When the author began this series—mindful of Ernie Lee’s comment that “Jerry Byrd was on nearly everything I did, as a steel player” (made during a February 1976 interview with Doug Green)—he assumed that the resonant guitar harmonics which open and close Lee’s “Second-Hand Heart” recording were played by Byrd on his steel guitar at a later date and overdubbed into the mix. (Guitarist/inventor Les Paul *had* helped bring “sound on sound” experimentation into the mainstream back in 1947 via his overdubbed instrumental cover of Rodgers and Hart’s song “Lover,” released in February 1948, roughly twenty-three months before Lee’s January 1950 session.) However, upon further reflection, it seems far more likely that *Chet Atkins* actually supplied the harmonics on his electric guitar.

Besides the guitar harmonics, Lee’s “Second-Hand Heart” cover features prominent mandolin playing by Jethro Burns and a relaxed mid-song break by Atkins, exploiting the mel-low mid-register of his electric guitar.

One wonders why, at Ernie Lee’s final RCA session, Lee and/or RCA decided not to make their usual use of Byrd’s backing talents. Perhaps Byrd was unavailable due to preparations being made for him to record his first 78 rpm album, *Nani Hawaii*, with Hawaiian performers Danny Kuaana, Al McIntire, Mel Peterson and George Ku. To infer from Johnny Sippel’s “Folk Talents and Tunes” column in the January 21, 1950 issue of *Billboard*, Byrd completed *Nani Hawaii* by the end of the third week of January (“Jerry Byrd [Mercury]

Continued on Page 20

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DISC 'N' DATA



“Alfred Aholo Apaka, Hawaii’s Golden Voice” (Hana Ola Records, HOCD-32000)

Review by John Ely

Hawaii’s Golden Voice, a 2010 Hana Ola release that somehow escaped our attention when it first came out, is a wonderful survey of Alfred Apaka’s earlier, perhaps lesser-known recordings made from the middle to late 1940s.

The tracks are beautiful and direct—they don’t have the production “sheen” that characterized many of the later recordings—and the steel guitar and vocals come through loud and clear. The CD will be a revelation to those who are only familiar with the many classic recordings Apaka made with steel guitarist Jules Ah See. These recordings feature brilliant steel guitar work by Pua Almeida and Tommy Castro (as well as a couple of tracks with David Keli’i).

The CD opens with five tracks Alfred recorded for the Bell Record

“No-Internet” Order Info

Members without Internet can order the Hana Ola recordings reviewed here by writing to: Cord International, P.O. Box 152, Ventura, CA 93002; or, just call (805) 648-7881.

Company with Randy Oness’ Select Serenaders, including “Nalani,” “Hau-nani,” “Hawaiian Hula Eyes,” “Makalapa-pua” and “Moon of the Southern Seas.” The band featured Alvin Kaleolani Isaacs on guitar, Pua Almeida on steel guitar and guitar, “Buddy” Peterson on string bass, “Steppy” De Rego on steel guitar and guitar, Randy Oness on clarinet and ‘ukulele, and Alfred Apaka on vocals. Pua’s playing is phenomenal and demonstrates his command of harmonics and “fade-away” effects you get by twisting the volume knob while picking. His solo and subsequent fills on “Hawaiian Hula Eyes” are not to be believed. Isaacs’ and Oness’ arrangements and singing are terrific and provide a perfect backdrop for Apaka’s sweet baritone.

Next featured are two 1948 recordings Alfred Apaka made for the Aloha Recording Company with Al Kealoha Perry and his Singing Surfriders: “Twilight in Hawaii” and “Two Shadows on the Sand,” which feature sparse yet gorgeous steel guitar from the great David Keli’i. The band also included Simeon and Andy Bright on guitar, John “Squeeze” Kamana on ‘ukulele, Bob Kauahikaua on background vocals and Frank “Mystery” Cockett on string bass.

The rest of the CD is taken from Apaka’s 1949 Bell recordings with his own group, “Alfred Apaka’s Hawaiians,” which featured “Steppy” De Rego on guitar and Tommy Castro on steel guitar. The tracks also feature Benny Kalama’s considerable arranging skills and high tenor voice, a taste of what was to come in the famous Hawaiian Village Serenaders era some five years later. The vocal arrangements are gorgeous and Tommy’s playing is superb, playing only what is needed and no more.

Alfred Aholo Apaka, Hawaii’s Golden Voice is a must-buy for steel guitar fans and players alike, especially for those who may not have heard the early Apaka recordings. Kudos to

Harry B. Soria, who produced the CD along with Michael Cord, for his terrific liner notes chronicling Apaka’s life, career, and untimely departure at the cusp of international stardom.

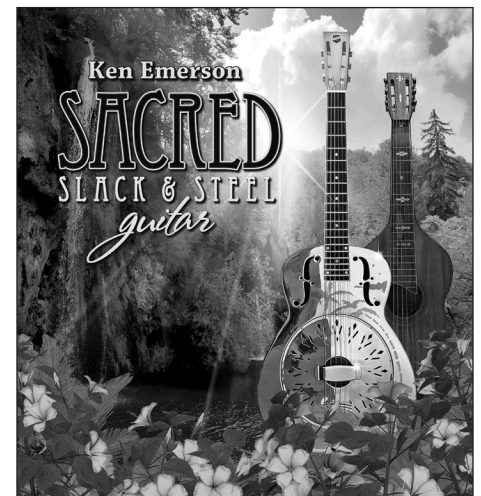
The price for the Alfred Apaka CD is \$8.99 plus \$2.45 shipping/handling within the U.S. and \$10.99 plus \$2.45 shipping/handling for orders outside the U.S. Just go to the website at www.cordinternational.com and click on the ‘View All Titles’ heading.

“Sacred Slack & Steel Guitar,” – Ken Emerson (Hana Ola Records, HOCD-2075)

Review by John Ely

Ken Emerson continues his “Slack & Steel” series with his latest release on Michael Cord’s Hana Ola Records titled *Sacred Slack & Steel Guitar*. The CD reminds us that a large body of early Twentieth Century popular music has roots in American faith-based traditions, spirituals and hymns, especially those of the Deep South.

An all-instrumental CD, Ken successfully blends early acoustic Hawaiian steel guitar styles with styles that owe their existence to the invention of the steel guitar: delta blues and bottleneck, country music dobro, and even hints of more recent electric slide guitar styles. As such, the CD covers a



wide range of styles and moods, and strikingly, they often are blended together in the same song and even within the same phrase. That's what you call living and breathing a few generations of America's best music!

Most of the tracks feature Ken soloing on steel and guitar/slack key over a bed of rhythm guitar and bass. Ken plays all the instruments on the album, including a 1928 National Tri-cone steel guitar, a 1930 National Style 'O' guitar, a 1940s Kay double bass, a 1930 Martin Style 2 uke and a 2001 Taylor 414ce guitar.

Sacred Slack & Steel Guitar isn't really a Hawaiian record in the usual sense, but Hawaiian flavor is peppered throughout. For example, "In the Sweet By and By" includes a tremolo-style solo and sweet harmonic ending that could be found on any pure Hawaiian steel guitar recording. In "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," Ken plays interesting dobro-style counterpoint in the low register but also includes impressive single-note flourishes that evoke the era of Jim & Bob and Sol Ho'opi'i. Same thing for "When The Saints Go Marching In."

Full-on delta blues takes front and center in "Ezekiel's Wheels," "Give My That Old Time Religion," "This Little Light of Mine" and "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" with its hypnotic ostinato bass pattern. But as already noted, Ken is not above throwing in wild, Sol Ho'opi'i-style flourishes and "chicken skin" harmonics.

In "Joshua Fit the Battle at Jericho," Ken plays in a 1920s klezmer jazz style on his 1928 National Tricone steel guitar. A very interesting track, a tutorial on how to play in minor keys, which is not done nearly enough on steel guitar these days.

"I'll Fly Away" has an overall bluegrass feel with a Hawaiian-style harmonic solo thrown in. Possibly my favorite track, "End of My Journey," is beautifully played in the style of a slow hula with more of those take-off, single-note flurries thrown in and another classic tremolo-style solo.

In "Go Tell It on the Mountain," Ken uses an effective mixture of slow rubato verses and energetic choruses. The CD closes with a wistful solo bottleneck rendering of "Amazing Grace." Other tracks on the release include, "Jesus on the Mainline" and "Down by the Riverside."

You can preview any of the tracks and order downloadable versions at the Cord International website (www.cord-international.com). Just click on the graphic of the CD on the homepage. A nice touch with the CD packaging is the inclusion of notes on the origins of most of the selections. To boot, the notes also include a link to downloadable tunings and chord charts Ken used on the CD.

The recording is crystal clear with the mix panned to give the feeling of live instruments playing together in your living room. Ken did a great job multi-tracking himself many times over to create the ensemble effect, and the play-

ing is soulful and energetic—so hard to do when you record this way. Kudos to Ken for another great addition to his Slack & Steel series.

The price of the CD is \$12.99 plus \$2.00 shipping/handling within the U.S. and \$2.45 shipping/handling for orders outside the U.S. Just go to the Cord International website at www.cordinternational.com. ■

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Note: Buy & Sell ads are free to paid up HSGA members.

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Thank you, members, for your generous donations to both our General Fund and Scholarship Fund, which are so important to our prime directive of teaching a new generation of steel guitar players.

Special thanks to the following members, who each donated a generous \$100 to either or both of our funds: **E.P. Davis** of Fort Collins, Colorado; **Kris Oka** from Daly City, California; **Greg and Sandra Sardinha** from Kailua, Hawai'i; **Bill Thomson** of Ocean City, Maryland; and **Julie Haunani Waters** from Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i whose donations we associate with the memory of her husband, one of our beloved members and musicians, **Bob "Pulevai" Waters**.

The following members donated \$10 or more:

Pete Burke, Shell Beach, CA
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John Troutman, Lafayette, LA
Gloria V. Umbarger, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

CLOSING NOTES

HSGA Bids Farewell to Dirk Vogel (1933-2014)

We got the sad news from HSGA member Warren Slavin just before press time that noted Hawaiian recordings collector and Aloha International Steel Guitar Club president, Dirk Vogel, passed away on August 29, 2014 at the age of 80. Thanks to Warren for the following story on Dirk's life and music. (We also include some nice tributes we received from other HSGA members who knew Dirk well.)

Dirk Vogel was born in Singapore on September 25, 1933. His father was a salesman in Southeast Asia and the Dutch Indies in the 1930s. From the age of 9 to 11, Dirk lived in a concentration camp in Indonesia. From the age of 11 to 15, he was enrolled in an Indonesian school system not known for its academic excellence.

During these years, Dirk was exposed to the local culture, a time when Hawaiian music was very popular. At age 15, Dirk's family moved to Holland, and Dirk's interest in Hawaiian music escalated as the Indonesian steel guitar players were touring Holland, notably Coy Pereira, Rudy Wairata, and Peter and George DeFretes. Dirk became an accomplished player of the Hawaiian steel guitar.

At age 23, Dirk decided to move to America, sponsored by the Church of the Brethren in Holland. He was sent to Baltimore, then to Chicago and finally to Minneapolis where his interest in Hawaiian music and steel guitar continued to grow at a faster pace.

In 1987 Dirk took the leadership role of a Hawaiian steel guitar organization that originated in Winchester, Indiana. He renamed the small group the Aloha International Steel Guitar Club (AISGC) and was responsible for bringing twenty-five solo or group artists to Winchester, almost all of them from Hawai'i. He personally directed the club activities with advice from the club's board of directors. He was editor of the club's very informative quarterly newsletter. He also maintained a club treasury that adequately covered all club expenses and published regular financial statements on club activities.

Dirk was very gracious in sharing his vast collection of Hawaiian music recordings and in 2002, he donated the collection to the University of Hawaii at Mānoa Library for its preservation. Dirk had been collecting Hawaiian music since the 1920s, and his collection included 6,000 78 rpm records, 2,650 LPs, 900 45s and thousands of other items. He was included in Tony Todaro's book, *The Golden Years of Hawaiian Entertainment*.

Dirk will be missed.



Dirk Vogel (left) with Hawaiian entertainer Hal Aloma at New York City's Luau 400 club in 1959. (Photo courtesy of John Marsden)

From George "Keoki" Lake

Dirk and I go back a long way before he formed the Aloha Int'l Steel Guitar Club. I always adored his sweet tone and soft approach to the acoustic Hawaiian steel guitar. His vibrato was indeed very unique on the instrument, which gave it a singing quality. Speaking of singing, in his later years, friends and club members discovered he had a smooth vocal styling, which everyone enjoyed so very much.

About 25 years ago (possibly longer), as I was attending one of the many conventions, Dirk allowed me to play his coveted 1935 Epiphone Emperor standard guitar while I was backing so many [steel players] at the convention. Of course, I fell in love with this fine instrument and asked Dirk if he would be consider selling it to me. He declined my offer for many years until the day finally arrived when he consented to the sale. Every time I play this beautiful instrument my thoughts go back to the fun times we enjoyed at those early conventions.

Dirk and I exchanged musical tapes over the years until cassette tapes became obsolete. He was a tremendous source of Hawaiian steel guitar knowledge and willingly shared so much of it with not only myself here in Canada, but his hundreds of friends who also cherish Hawaiian music throughout the world. Dirk was *the* giant amongst Hawaiian recorded memorabilia enthusiasts. I'm certain he collected most every recording of the Hawaiian "greats," which he eventually and wisely donated to the [University of Hawai'i Library]. He was a very fine friend to me whom I will miss so very much. My sincerest condolences and Aloha of love to [Dirk's wife] Dee and the Vogel 'ohana (family). *Aloha Ke Akua* (God is love). *A Hui Hou* (until we meet again), my friend.

From John and Millie Tipka

Aloha a hui hou, Dirk, as you have now made your voyage Beyond the Reef and Across the Sea to a Beautiful Isle of Somewhere. The strains of the Hawaiian steel guitar will continue to be heard worldwide because of your and Dee's incessant lifelong effort to promote the sound of the instrument. You leave behind a legacy not to be forgotten through the music you captured in past times and leave to us. Our deepest condolences to Dee and the Vogel family in this time of their loss.

From the Williams Twins

There was no question—we *had* to go. Through the years we had become very close to Dirk and Dee. John, our son, had just arrived home from Saipan. When we heard about Dirk passing away, we immediately almost in unison said, "If at all possible, we would very much like to go to support Dee." When Dee knew we were coming, she asked if we would be a part of the service. We were honored to do so.

We started out with intentions of a 10-hour drive from Michigan to Minneapolis, which turned into 13 hours due to road construction! We arrived Thursday evening about 11:45 PM. We arrived at the church at 9 AM the following morning for a beautiful memorial service.

Redeemer Covenant Church is located on the northwest side of Minneapolis where Dirk and Dee lived and raised their daughter and two sons. Dirk and Dee had been members of this church for years. The memorial service was held on Friday, September 5, 2014 at 11:30 AM in the church's beautiful sanctuary. Lovely floral arrangements basked Dirk's picture and urn. On each side of the altar and up on the wall, two screens displayed a great picture setting of Dirk standing in the woods.

Dirk loved his grandchildren. Two of them, Emma and Tyler Maxson, shared a song in memory of their grandpa, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." It was a very meaningful and humbling experience listening to them perform. Dirk and Dee's daughter gave a lovely testimonial in honor of her dad. Their pastor, Rev. Steve Larson, sang a beautiful solo, "In the Garden," and we were honored to take part in Dirk's service by playing and singing "There's Just Something About That Name."

The church prepared a very nice luncheon after the service. Dee wanted to have a Hawaiian theme and asked us to play during the dinner. She had the tables all set up with Hawaiian leis, etc. It was very bright and colorful. She had told all the women to wear something colorful as that is what Dirk would have requested. It reminded Joanne and me of the many times Dirk and Dee would be responsible for the Saturday Night Lū'aus in Winchester.

Needless to say, Dirk will be missed, not only in their church, but by all who knew him. He will always be remem-



Dirk Vogel at our 1992 Joliet Convention. (Photo by Clay Savage)

bered and highly respected as our wonderful friend. As Director of AISGC for many years, Dirk gave his all in promoting Hawaiian culture and music, and his impact will be felt for years to come. ■

2014-2015 Dues Alert

This is your FINAL issue if your newsletter mailing label still shows "X 6/14" next to your address. Annual dues are \$30, which includes First Class delivery (Air Mail delivery for overseas addresses). Renew today! Mahalo.

Steel Guitar Events Calendar

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 Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i, 11 AM. For more information call (808) 375-9379 or visit kekulamele.com.

March 12-15, 2015—TSGA Non-Pedal Room

The Sixth Annual Rick Alexander Non-Pedal Session at the Texas Steel Guitar Association's annual jamboree in the Dallas area.

April 24-26, 2015—Maui Steel Guitar Festival

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

E Komo Mai! Welcome, New Members

Is your address correct? Please notify us!

UNITED STATES

JEFF KEARNS, 1209 Dalemere Dr., Nashville, TN 37207

KEVIN BARRY, 36 Beverly Road, Natick, MA 01760

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JAN KURT VØLNER CLAUSSEN, Aspenesveien 7, Liland, 8534 Norway

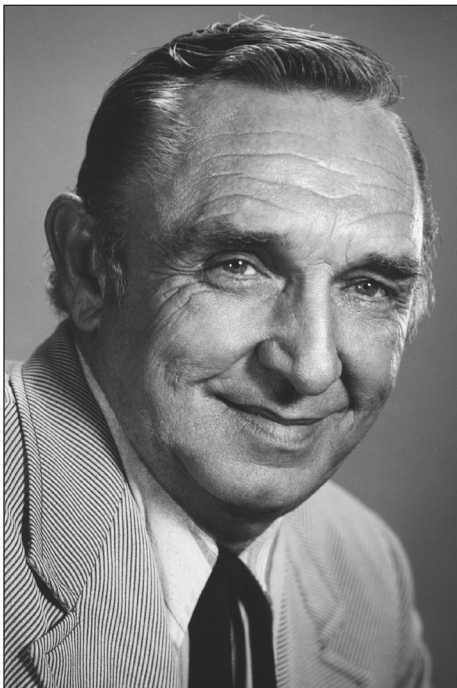
YOSHIYUKI ENDO, 4-87 Kita-Karuisawa, Nishi-ku, Yokohama 220-0001 Japan

BYRD-LEE Continued from Page 15

WLW, Cincinnati, cut a Hawaiian album recently with Danny Kuanna and His Islanders ...”).

Lee’s other three recordings (on which the author hears no trace of steel guitar) consisted of “Headin’ Home (To Old Kentucky),” a “peppy” number written by Raymond Scrivner from Lee’s hometown of Berea, Kentucky; “I’m a Lonesome Man,” a bluesy song composed by Red Foley and Zeb Turner, older brother of Pleasant Valley Boys

Promotional photo of Ernie Lee in his later years (from the mid-1980s?). (Photo courtesy of Joe Fothergill)



guitarist Zeke Turner; and “Tormented,” a rather bland four-four tune written by Erwin King. (King had also composed “Two Little Brown Shoes,” which Rex Allen recorded with Byrd back in summer 1949, as related in Part VI in the Winter 2013 issue.)

Mercury released “Second Hand Heart” as the “B” side to “Headin’ Home (To Old Kentucky)” in early February 1950. The record reviews section of the March 11, 1950 issue of *Billboard*—while acknowledging the “mixed pop-country flavor” of “Headin’ Home”—praised “Second Hand Heart” as “the true hillbilly side, a torcher [torch song] cleffed [sung] and performed in the authentic rural manner,” adding that the tune was “retentive” [easily remembered].

So, in retrospect it appears that Jerry Byrd’s backing of Ernie Lee on Lee’s original composition “Pray Pray Pray” in Atlanta on February 2, 1949 (described in Part Four in the Summer 2013 issue) was the final RCA side on which he accompanied Lee. “Pray Pray Pray” was by no means the final Lee recording in which Byrd participated, however. Judging from aural evidence, Byrd played on at least *nineteen* more Lee sides between September 1950 and December 1953 in the wake of Lee’s signing with Mercury, then MGM.

Lee’s last MGM recording session took place on December 21, 1953 with Byrd apparently playing on the two

sides released from the four-song session. By that point, Lee had left WLW for WHIO radio and TV in Dayton, Ohio (fifty-four miles northeast of Cincinnati). Sometime in 1954, Lee moved to St. Petersburg, Florida. He spent the remainder of his career as a Tampa-St. Petersburg television personality, first on WSUN-TV, St. Petersburg, then, beginning in 1958, WTVT-TV, Tampa, where he hosted several different programs. (Lee did briefly return to Cincinnati’s “Midwestern Hayride” for a nine-month period in 1956.)

Lee’s final recordings included two sides waxed for Tampa’s Nugget label in 1960 and a 1965 folk and gospel influenced album produced and sold by WTVT, *Ernie’s Big 13: Songs From “The Good Day Show,”* a play on WTVT’s nickname, “The Big (Channel) 13.”

Thanks to Lisa Raney and Jeanne Strauss-De Groote, of the Genealogy and Local History Department at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, for their Cincinnati city directory lookup work. Thanks also to Aaron Mintz of South Deerfield, Massachusetts for providing the author with a dub of the “Faultless Starch Time” program of May 15, 1949, and to Amy Pace for her graphics assistance. Information on Ricky Riddle’s career was taken from Craig Maki and Keith Cady’s recently published “Detroit Country Music: Mountaineers, Cowboys, and Rockabillies” and Maki’s biographical sketch of Riddle at www.dannyriddle.com/rickyriddle/rickyriddle.html, a web page maintained by Riddle’s nephew, gospel singer Danny Riddle. Ernie Lee’s interview with Douglas B. Green was conducted on February 25, 1976 in Tampa, Florida as part of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum’s Oral History Project. Green’s interview tapes are currently housed in the Oral History Collection at the CMHF’s Frist Library and Archive (OH-90). ■