

HSGA QUARTERLY

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by the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association

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A group photo of all the attendees at our last Honolulu Convention held in April 2013. Our Honolulu conventions are held in spring on odd years and are not to be missed!

Honolulu 2015 Convention Close-Up

From Kamaka Tom

We're all set for the Honolulu 2015 Convention! The dates are Wednesday, April 29 and Thursday, April 30 in the Peacock Room on the third floor of the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel for HSGA day-time activities. Also on tap during convention week and just a short distance from the hotel is our annual Lei Day concert in Kapi'olani Park on Friday, May 1, 10 AM to 3 PM and our mini-concert at the Waikīkī-Kapahulu Library on Saturday, May 2, 1-3 PM. The convention is also a great opportunity to catch Hawaiian steel guitar playing around Waikīkī and see the sights around O'ahu if you have the time.

Registering for the convention is a two-step process: registering with the

hotel and registering with HSGA for the convention. Important: *Members are responsible for booking their own rooms, and the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel does not handle convention registration.* Note: For late-breaking information on the convention, you can check our website (www.hsga.org) or our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/HawaiianSteelGuitarAssociation).

Hotel Reservations

The Queen Kapi'olani Hotel is two blocks from Kuhio Beach in Waikīkī on the Diamond Head end of the Waikīkī hotel district. To make a reservation, you have two options. You can call the hotel toll-free at (866) 970-4164. Don't forget to mention our

Continued on Page 2

HSGA QUARTERLY

Volume 30, Issue 117



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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.

HONOLULU 2015 *Cont. from Page 1*

group discount code 'HSGA2015' to get the best price on rooms. You can also book rooms via the Internet. Go to the HSGA home page at www.hsga.org and click the link near the bottom of the page to go to our Honolulu 2015 Convention page. Once the page loads, you'll see halfway down a link to the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel online reservations form where you can enter your arrival and departure dates, the discount code, and check availability. The tricky part is you have to enter the code 'HSGA2015' in the Promo Code field of the form.

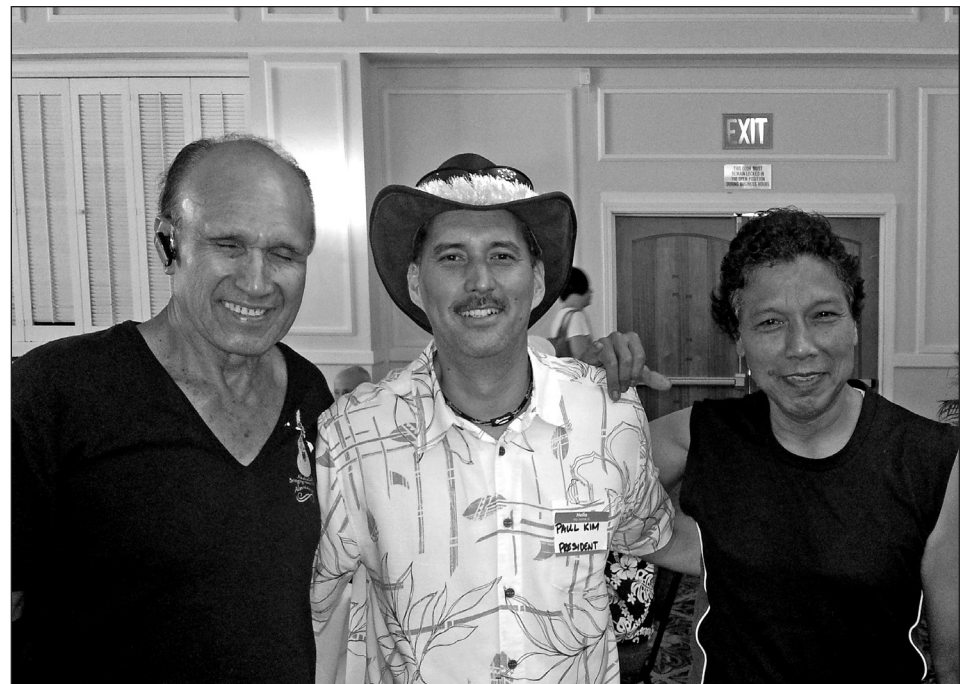
Room prices range from \$121 for a City View room to \$139 for Diamond Head View to \$156 for Ocean View (prices do not include taxes and fees). The special room rate applies from April 21 through May 7. A credit card is required at time of booking to hold the room. Cancellations may be made up to 72 hours prior to arrival without penalty. The address of the hotel is: Queen Kapi'olani Hotel, 150 Kapahulu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815.

Convention Registration

In addition to making your hotel reservation, you need to complete the convention registration form provided in the newsletter insert and mail it to the Honolulu address given on the form. Please get it to us as soon as you can. The convention fee is \$120 per person, which includes an island-style all-you-can-eat buffet luncheon in the Peacock Room on both convention days. Walk-in guests may order the luncheon on those days for \$45 but only if seats are available. Please make checks payable in U.S. dollars to 'The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association'.

You can also pay your registration fee online via the Brown Paper Tickets (BPT) website if you prefer. Very convenient! Again, just go to the HSGA home page, click the link to our Honolulu 2015 Convention page, and then click the BPT link. If you decide to attend at the last minute or you are coming from overseas and don't want to deal with currency exchange until you arrive, you will be able to pay your convention fee on the first day of the convention.

Waiting in the wings at our last Honolulu convention in 2013, crooner Gary Aiko (left) and HSGA President Paul Kim with fellow steel guitar ace Bobby Ingano.





On the Honolulu 2013 stage, Bob Alaniz, playing his frypan (fancy stand, eh?) with Wayne Shishido (left) and Jack Aldrich.

Convention Schedule

The convention starts on Wednesday, April 29, in the hotel's third floor Peacock Room. You may register beginning at 8:30 AM. We will have live member stage performances from 9 AM to 3 PM with a buffet luncheon provided for pre-registered guests. Same thing on Thursday, April 30—registration starts at 8:30 AM, live steel guitar from 9 AM to 3 PM with buffet luncheon.

Performer Time Slots

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

Please notify me if you are available to perform at our May Day show at Kapi'olani Park or at the Waikiki-Kapahulu Public Library mini-concert. You will need to be scheduled in advance. Contact me using the information at the end of this article.

HSGA "Lei Day" Performances

On Friday, May 1 (Lei Day), HSGA will host member steel guitar performances from 10 AM to 3 PM as part of the 2013 Annual Lei Festival in Kapi'olani Park. The festival features daylong entertainment on the main stage with appearances by the Royal Hawaiian Band and the 2013 Lei Queen and Court. HSGA will perform on a separate stage next to the display area for the Lei-Making Contest winners. Again, steel soloists need to sign up to perform—please contact me to be scheduled.

Waikiki-Kapahulu Library Mini-Concert

On Saturday, May 2, HSGA will host a Hawaiian steel guitar mini-concert at the Waikiki-Kapahulu Public Library from 1 PM to 3 PM. Open to the public, free admission.

Joseph Kekuku Statue Unveiling

A life-sized statue memorializing Hawaiian steel guitar pioneer and native of La'ie, Joseph Kekuku, will be officially dedicated on Monday, April 27—the Monday just prior to our convention—at the Polynesian Cultural Center in La'ie on the Windward side of O'ahu. The date was just set at press time and program details have yet to be worked out. We believe the ceremony will include performances by local steel guitarists. Check the website for late-breaking details. This will be a very special event and a very good reason to arrive a few days early for the convention.

Evening hours are yours during the convention. We can steer you to nearby Hawaiian entertainment that may feature good Hawaiian music and maybe steel guitar. There are lots of dining options within walking distance of the hotel; ask your hotel concierge. Waikiki after all is known as the "Playground of the Pacific." The Honolulu public bus system is very good and runs near our hotel.

Please contact me, Kamaka Tom, in Honolulu, Hawai'i if you need assistance or information regarding our 2015 Honolulu Convention.

-Me Ke Aloha A Nui Loa, a Mahalo (with much aloha, and thank you),

Kamaka Tom
2434 Waioma'o Road
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816
gktom007@yahoo.com
808-392-4583 (cell)

From Mainland China, teacher and steel guitarist Zhang Yi Wen (left) with Greg Sardinha at the 2013 Honolulu Convention.



Maui Steel Guitar Fest' 2015

The Seventh Annual Maui Steel Guitar Festival will be held April 24-26, 2015, at the Kā'anapali Beach Hotel on Maui's Lahaina side. This three-day festival will feature Hawaiian steel guitar performances by some of Hawai'i's acclaimed steel guitar artists as well as artists from Japan. Featured steel guitar artists include Alan Akaka, Jeff Au Hoy, Bobby Ingano, Ross Ka'a'a, Joel Katz, Lion Kobayashi, Patty Maxine, Eddie Palama, Ed Punua, Owana Salazar, Greg Sardinha, and Geronimo Valdriz. In addition to the featured artists for the evening concerts, daytime performances will feature many steel guitar players who signed up for a spot on the open stage. Students from Ke Kula Mele Hawai'i School of Hawaiian Music under the direction of Kumu Alan Akaka will also perform. In addition to the stage performances, the festival will offer free workshops in steel guitar, lei making, 'ukulele playing, "Hawaiian-style" singing, hula and kanikapila jam sessions. Festival events are free and open to the public: Friday and Saturday 10:00 AM to 11:00 PM, Sunday 9:00 AM to 1 PM. For more information go to the festival website at www.mauisteelguitarfestival.com or call (808) 375-9379. ■



Member Ronald Carter from New Zealand taking his turn at the Friday Kanikapila "jam" at last year's Maui Steel Guitar Festival.

HSGA Donations

Thanks to **Frank D. Brandenburg** of Largo, Florida for his donation to the HSGA General Fund this past quarter. The General Fund helps us cover our routine operating expenses, which are increasingly hard to cover with member dues. *Mahalo!*

Allen Melbert

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Hawaiian Steel Mini Camp

The 2015 Mini Camp will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, April 22-23, 2015 on the grounds of the Kā'anapali Beach Hotel immediately preceding the Maui Steel Guitar Festival. The two-day camp will feature concentrated workshops tailored to participants. Three intensive Hawaiian steel guitar sessions—two in the morning and one in the afternoon—will be conducted on each day by Alan Akaka and Greg Sardinha, two of Hawai'i's great steel guitar masters. Each day will end with an afternoon kanikapila jam session—campers can participate to hone their skills or just sit back and enjoy the performances.

Campers have an option of attending one day at \$75, or both days for \$100. To encourage students to participate in the event, camp scholarships are available from the Arts Education for Children Group, one of the camp's sponsors. Meals and lodging are available from the Kā'anapali Beach Hotel at added cost. Campers will also be invited to participate as a group at one of the Maui Steel Guitar Festival's open stage performances on Friday. For more information go the camp website at www.hawaiiansteelguitarcamp.com. ■

HSGA Board of Directors Openings!

If you are interested in guiding the future of HSGA, please send us your name or nominations of people you think would be valuable board members—send to board@hsga.org. We especially need folks to help handle club finances and to help organize and run our Hawaii and mainland conventions. *Mahalo!*

Fort Collins a “Go” for 2015

From Tony Fourcroy and Chris Kennison

After complications finding a hotel for our upcoming HSGA Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival, we’ve finally decided on the Hilton Garden Inn, once again in Fort Collins, Colorado. The Colorado State football schedule was the barrier to us using the big Hilton Hilton as we did last fall. We’ll be in the same town, same airport, just a different hotel. A definite plus, the Hilton Garden Inn is in the newest part of town surrounded by nice restaurants that you can walk to and nearby shopping. The area is a mix of offices, restaurants and hotels—very safe and modern. At around two miles off the interstate, it’s very easy to drive to.

We’ll have details in the upcoming Spring issue and on our website. We had a very respectable turnout for our inaugural Fort Collins festival and look forward to building on last year’s success. Stay tuned and mark your calendars for October 1-3, folks! ■

Waikīkī Steel Festival 2015

The Sixth Annual Waikīkī Steel Guitar Festival offers a wonderful opportunity to enjoy Hawaiian steel guitar in performances by some of Hawai‘i’s master steel guitar artists led by Alan Akaka. The festival will take place on Saturday, July 18, 2015, from 3-7 PM at Waikīkī Beach Walk’s Plaza Lawn and Stage. Students from Ke Kula Mele Hawai‘i School of Hawaiian Music under the direction of Kumu Alan Akaka will also perform. Free and open to the public. Validated parking available. For more information go to the festival website at www.waikikisteelguitarfestival.com or call (808) 375-9379. ■

At the 2014 Waikiki Steel Fest, Jeff Au Hoy (left), Eddie Palama, Owana Salazar, Bobby Ingano, Alan Akaka and Greg Sardinha.



Nashville member Jeff Kearns in his “steel debut” at Ft. Collins last year with Jeff Au Hoy on bass and Gerald Ross on guitar.

Fall Newsletter Errata

We received a letter from John Marsden, who carefully read the Fall 2014 newsletter and caught a couple of errors we must set aright. In our article “Beautiful is Hawaii: Jerry Byrd’s *Nani Hawaii* Album of 1950, Part I,” we incorrectly stated that Mel Peterson’s first name was Melvin. The correct first name is Melville. In our review of the CD “Eddie Bush and The Biltmore Trio,” we repeatedly listed the leader of the Biltmore Trio as Earl Burnett. The correct last name is Earl Burtnett.

Many thanks, John. It’s nice to know that someone is examining the newsletter carefully!

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The Lexington Hotel's Legendary Hawaiian Room

By Frank Della-Penna

On a recent business trip to New York City, I was given a private tour of the Lexington Hotel's former, historic Hawaiian Room by the hotel manager. Just viewing the space I could imagine the beautiful sounds coming from the orchestra of Ray Kinney, the sound of a gentle glissando from Tommy Castro's steel guitar, and the sounds of Sam Koki, Johnny Pineapple and Dick McIntire to name just a few. The falsetto voices of George Kainapau and Ray Kinney graced by hula dancers Meymo Holt, Marjorie Leilani Iaea, Edna Kihoi, Nani Todd, Leimomi Wood, Jennie Wood, Piilani and Pualani Mossman mesmerized audiences for years.

The Hawaiian Room, the inspiration of Managing Director Charles E. Rochester, opened on June 23, 1937 and continued until the late 1950s. During the first two years, it made a million dollars, big bucks in those days, and 364,127 paper leis were given to guests.

George Kainapau made his first appearance in 1937, and through live radio broadcasts from the Hawaiian Room, he garnered nationwide attention singing "Ke Kali Nei Au" (the "Hawaiian Wedding Song"), "E Mama E" and the "Pa'au'au Waltz." Dr. George S. Kanahale in his book *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* wrote that the Hawaiian Room was the most popular showcase for Hawaiian music in the nation. In fact, in a 1938 poll of American singers taken in New York, Ray Kinney scored higher than Rudy Vallée and Guy Lombardo. Ray Kinney's four years at the

The modern-day Lexington Hotel near the intersection of Lexington Avenue and 48th Street in New York City.



HSGA Board member and steel guitarist Frank Della-Penna posing inside the historic Hawaiian Room of the Lexington Hotel.

Lexington Hotel set a record for a continuous engagement at one spot by a group of musical entertainers. At a typical Hawaiian Room evening performance Kinney would sing an unheard of 65 to 90 songs while maintaining total control of his voice. He was also a great technical singer with excellent phrasing, timing, vocal projection, and breath control, allowing him to sing long melodic lines without a break. Kinney's trademark and inseparable companion was a ukulele made by Manuel Nunes, one of the early Portuguese manufactures of the instrument.

The Hawaiian Room was a large circular tiered room with murals of Diamond Head and Waikiki Beach and decorated with flowers, palms and raindrops. In addition to live performances in this glorious space, performances at the Hawaiian Room were broadcast weekly over the radio to cities across the mainland. The venue's success resulted in a spurt of Hawaiian Room copies starting with the St. Regis Hotel (also in New York city) where Hilo Hattie held court, the Roosevelt Hotel in Chicago, the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco and other venues across the mainland.

At show time, exotic foods and drinks were served in hollowed coconuts by waitresses adorned with leis. A typical order might include roast duckling with sweet potato soufflé for \$3.95, an okolehao sling served in a real coconut for \$1.35 and a tropical orange flambé dessert for \$1.65. Not a bad deal for an amazing dinner with an evening's entertainment! Even Arthur Godfrey got into the act as a promoter of the Hawaiian Room. A vintage advertisement still hanging on a wall of the Hawaiian Room reads: "Arthur Godfrey says, 'For a wonderful family treat that's really hard to beat, be sure to visit the Hawaiian Room! You'll find the food superb, the atmosphere a delight, the girls and entertainment truly exciting. A must on your 'Hit Shows'

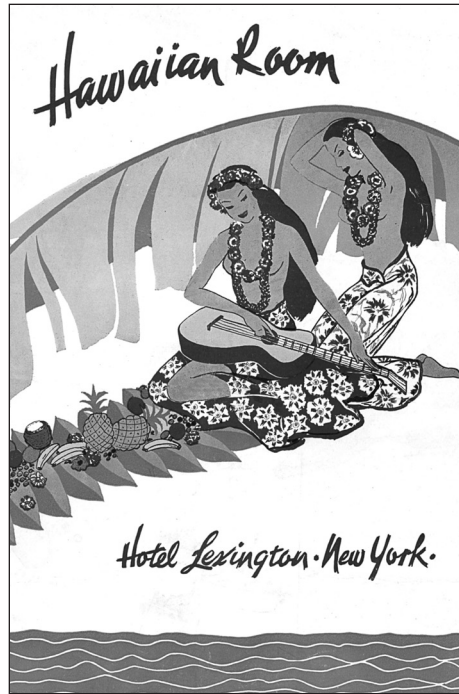
tour list.” A popular three-day tour package for two with a two-night stay at the Lexington ran \$39.75. Included was an orchestra seat in the Hawaiian Room, a tour of the United Nations and New York City, a midnight snack, dancing, a floorshow and a flower lei.

Warren Slavin, longtime member of the Aloha International Steel Guitar Club, during a recent interview recalled his visit to the Hawaiian Room while his ship, the USS Mendocino, was docked in New York City on its way to the Pacific Theater during WWII. He said that Hal Aloma had his Hawaiian steel guitar on a rolling stand and went from table to table playing and singing in front of patrons as the orchestra played on the stage!

The Lexington Hotel continues to offer fine music nightly—sadly not Hawaiian—in the lounge area with performances by small groups. I heard a combo composed of saxophone, trombone, guitar and upright bass with a vocalist doing jazz standards from the repertoire of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald.

In keeping with the overall look of the hotel, the wallpaper on the first floor features a beautiful art deco design with a music motif. Near the elevator is a

The Hawaiian Room’s art deco wallpaper.



Hawaiian Room vintage menu cover art. (Courtesy of the Scott Schell Collection)

cartoon-like drawing of Marilyn Monroe saying “Joe [DiMaggio], I really love you.” Monroe and DiMaggio were married on January 14, 1954 and after a Japan honeymoon, took up residence in Suite 1806 at the Lexington. It was just a few blocks from there—at the Lexington Avenue subway entrance—where the iconic skirt-blowing scene was filmed for Monroe’s film *The Seven Year Itch*.

There are still long lines to get into the basement of the Lexington Hotel, the former site of the Hawaiian Room. But today’s genre is disco and rap!! Nevertheless, it was great to see the old circular stage and dining area that is so well documented in the many photographs of the Lexington.

The Lexington Hotel is located at 511 Lexington Avenue (between 47th and 48th Street), New York City. ■

Members with Email

We have lots of out of date email addresses in our database. Please keep us up to date by notifying us at both hsga@hsga.org and johnely@hawaiiansteel.com. Mahalo!

Weekly Steel Spots

Jeff Au Hoy—appearing with Cyril Pahinui Wednesday evenings at the Kanikapila Grill in the Outrigger Hotel on Lewers Street. Jeff also appears with Cyril at Don’s Mai Tai Bar, part Don’s Royal Kona Resort on the Big Island, fourth Thursday of each month, 5-7 PM.

Alan Akaka—appearing with the Keawe ‘Ohana, Thursday evenings, 6:30-8:30 PM at the Kulana Terrace of the Marriott Hotel (on the second floor beachside part of the hotel on Kalākaua Avenue).

Steel guitarists with regular gigs, email johnely@hawaiiansteel.com to be added to this listing!

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SWSGA Convention Report

By Ivan Reddington

The Southwestern Steel Guitar Association (SWSGA) held their twelfth annual convention at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona this past January 15-17. While most of the players at SWSGA are pedal steel players, this year was different in that we had the lap steelers play on the big stage Friday afternoon from 1-5:30 PM. In the past we had been assigned to a separate room in another building.

While we had a couple of cancellations for the lap steel sessions, Bob Blair from Edmonton, Canada hosted and played the first session. He was assisted by Olli Haavisto from Finland, both on acoustic guitars. Bob played a Weissenborn and Olli played a resonator guitar.

Next was HSGA member Margie Mays from Mesa, Arizona playing a mix of Hawaiian and western music.

Steel Guitar Hall of Famer Bobby Black of Manteca, California also played some Hawaiian and western swing. Bobby talked about his stint with Bay-Area group Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen, which brought Bobby's playing to national attention.

I played a Hawaiian set and told SWSGA members about HSGA and about our upcoming convention in Honolulu.

Rose Sinclair of Austin, Texas played some big band and pop music. Rose currently tours with "juke joint swing" star Wayne Hancock.

Doug Livingston of Studio City, California played a variety of classical and pop music, and Dan Tyack of Olympia, Washington played a variety of music.

The lap steel sessions were well attended and seemed to be appreciated by the audience.

Margie Mays playing it sweet at this year's SWSGA convention.



Hall-of-Famer Bobby Black doing what he loves to do—playing it “straight” without pedals and, we might add, with great taste.

Johnny Farina was one of the headliners on the convention stage and played “Sleepwalk,” steel guitar’s one and only “chart topper,” written by him and his brother Santo Farina. He played a double-eight Fender on all of his sessions and told about his father getting them to play steel guitar when few people in New York knew what they were at the time. He was backed by the house band and Harry Orlove. Harry also played backup for most of the lap steel sessions.

The convention was well attended as a whole and everyone seemed to have a good time. The food at the Sheraton is always very good with pleasant waiters and staff. ■

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EVENTS CALENDAR

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. For event details and to sign up for an open stage performance time slot, go to the event website (www.mauisteelguitarfestival.com).

April 29-30, 2015—Honolulu Convention

Our biennial HSGA Honolulu Convention, held on odd years around May Day, is set for April 29-30 at the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel's Peacock Ballroom.

May 1, 2015, Lei Day Concert in the Park

The annual May Day Hawaiian music gala at Kapi'olani Park. HSGA hosts a stage featuring member performances and local steel guitarists, 10 AM - 3 PM.

May 2, 2015 Waikīkī-Kapahulu Library Concert

Performances by HSGA members and local steel guitarists, within walking distance of the Queen Kapi'olani Hotel. Free and open to the public, 1-3 PM.

May 9, 2015 Concert at Windward Mall

Enjoy the music of the Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian music under the direction of Kumu Alan Akaka at this year's Spring Concert to be held on Saturday, May 9, 2015 at 11 AM at Windward Mall in Kāne'ōhe on the island of O'ahu. Students will perform songs of Maui on steel guitar, 'ukulele, guitar and Hawaiian-style bass. Free to the public. For more information call (808) 375-9379 or visit kekulamele.com.

July 18, 2015—Waikīkī Steel Guitar Festival

The Sixth Annual Waikīkī Steel Guitar Festival will be held at the Waikīkī Beach Walk's Plaza Stage, featuring steel guitar masters and steel guitar students of the Ke Kula Mele Hawaii School of Hawaiian Music. Free and open to the public. For details, visit www.waikikisteelguitarfestival.com.

October 1-3, 2015—HSGA Annual Festival

We're on for our annual HSGA Hawaiian Music Festival at the Hilton Garden Inn in Fort Collins! Details to follow in the Spring issue and we'll post late-breaking information to our website as it becomes available. ■



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Akaka Falls

(Helen Parker)

Arrangement by Guy Cundell

Medium Waltz

Dobro (Basic)

Dobro (Advanced)

6

11

The score consists of three systems of music. Each system includes a melody line in treble clef and two sets of guitar tablature for Dobro. The first system covers measures 1-5, the second system covers measures 6-10, and the third system covers measures 11-15. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Chords are indicated above the melody line: D7, G, G7, and C. The tablature shows fret numbers for strings T, A, and B. The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system also ends with a double bar line. The third system ends with a double bar line.

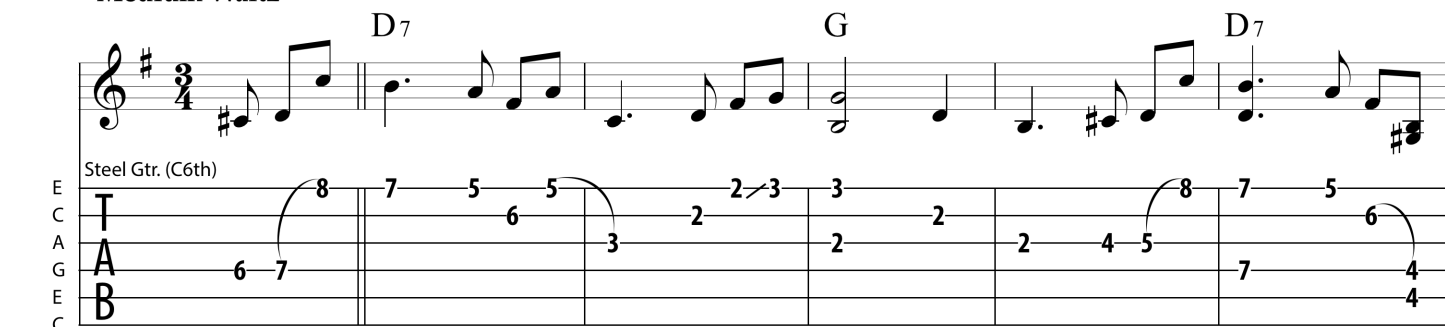
Akaka Falls

(Helen Parker)

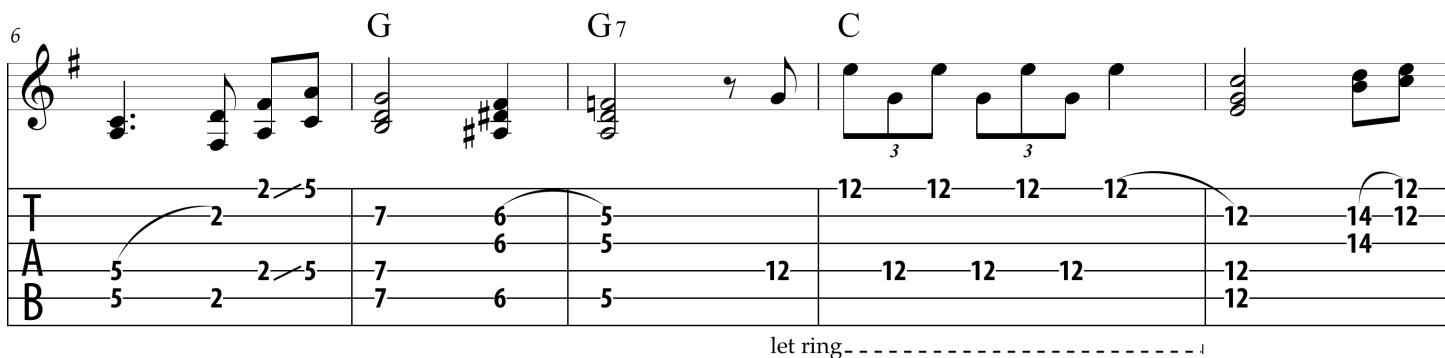
Arrangement by John Ely

Medium Waltz

Musical notation for measures 1-5. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 3/4 time. Chords: D7, G, D7. Steel Gtr. (C6th) tablature below.

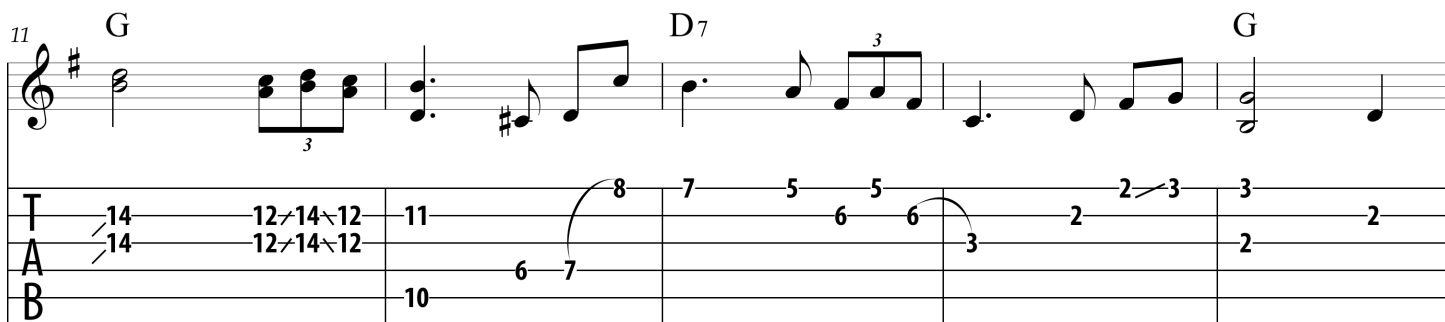


Musical notation for measures 6-10. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 3/4 time. Chords: G, G7, C. Steel Gtr. (C6th) tablature below. Includes a 'let ring' instruction.

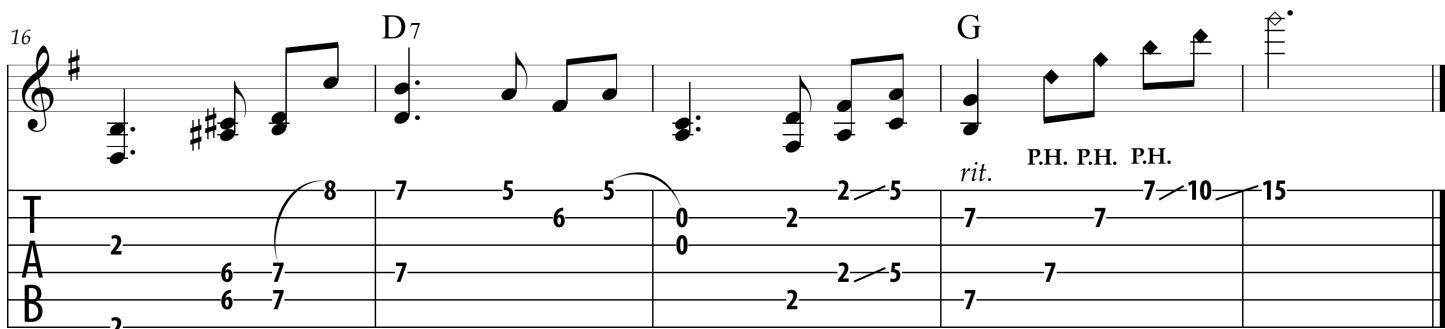


let ring-----

Musical notation for measures 11-15. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 3/4 time. Chords: G, D7, G. Steel Gtr. (C6th) tablature below.



Musical notation for measures 16-20. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 3/4 time. Chords: D7, G. Steel Gtr. (C6th) tablature below. Includes a 'rit.' instruction and 'P.H. P.H. P.H.' markings.



Beautiful is Hawaii: Jerry Byrd's *Nani Hawaii* Album of 1950, Part II

By Anthony Lis

In this series we are discussing Jerry Byrd's first album, *Nani Hawaii*, recorded for Mercury Records in January 1950 and released in the 78 rpm format that fall. On the album, Byrd's steel guitar playing was backed by a quartet of native Hawaiian musicians, "the Islanders," led by ukulele player/falsetto vocalist Danny Kuaana. Joining Kuaana were George Ku on guitar and vocals, Mel Peterson on rhythm guitar and vocals, and Al McIntire on upright bass and vocals.

Part One (in the Fall 2014 issue) provided background on the album, whose title (as John Marsden has related) is best translated as "Beautiful is Hawaii." The segment included a review of Byrd's country/folk and Hawaiian music performances and recordings up to the time of the *Nani Hawaii* sessions, along with biographi-

Jerry Byrd's autobiography, "It Was a Trip: On Wings of Music" issued by Centerstream Publications in May 2003.



cal information on the backup musicians and how the album came to be recorded (significantly, perhaps, during a point in Byrd's life where he was recording very little in the Hawaiian music genre).

As Byrd related in his 2003 autobiography *It Was a Trip: On the Wings of Music*, somewhere in late 1949 Mercury Records exec Murray Nash approached him about recording an album. Byrd jumped at the chance but insisted on doing a Hawaiian album with Hawaiian musicians. Nash went for the idea. Byrd contacted Danny Kuaana immediately and they made tentative plans to meet in Chicago where the sessions were to be done at RCA's studio there. In the meantime, they began working on the material, with Danny doing the vocal arrangements and Byrd, the instrumentals.

Corliss Johnson has observed that, in the wake of the end of World War II, newly successful independent record labels began experimenting with new recording formulas in hope of widening their markets. In 1950, Mercury was a relative newcomer to the post-war independent recording scene, having been established in Chicago in fall 1945. One wonders if Murray Nash's quick assent to Byrd's Hawaiian disc proposal was due in part to Mercury's interest in releasing various types of ethnic music to attract new audiences. 1950 also saw Mercury releasing a ten-inch LP of Alvaro De La Torre and His Cuban Orchestra's *Tropic Rhythms*, a calypso album by Trinidad-born Lancelot Pinard (aka Sir Lancelot) and the re-release of a 1948 album of Palestinian songs (as *Songs of Israel*). As the 1950s wore on and the twelve-inch LP replaced the ten-inch version, Mercury's ethnic offerings continued with the company releasing The Hawaiian Troubadors' *Sweet Hawaiian Mem-*



A studio shot of Danny Kuaana taken sometime between 1945 and 1947.

ories, Authentic Calypso With Lord Christo, and the Tonin Troupel ensemble's Folk Dances of the [French] Provinces.

More research is needed to precisely identify the steel guitar Byrd plied on *Nani Hawaii*. Conventional wisdom has it that Byrd used a Rickenbacher Electro lap steel he obtained from steel teacher and performer Ronald Dearth (who taught in Byrd's hometown of Lima, Ohio), with Byrd plugging into a Volu-Tone amplifier also obtained from Dearth. However, Byrd's brother Jack, in his unpublished 2005 compilation "Jerry Byrd and His Music," states that Byrd obtained a white-paneled post-World War II Rickenbacher Bakelite in 1949 (the year before the *Nani* sessions), which he consistently played before acquiring a seven-string Rickenbacher sometime in the 1950s.

From a close reading of "The Golden Years" chapter in *It Was a Trip*, clues in early 1950s *Billboard* magazines, and the author's own reflection, it seems likely that *Nani Hawaii* was recorded sometime between January 5 and January 17, 1950 in at least two

sessions perhaps spanning successive days. The first song recorded was “I Regret to Say Aloha,” a slow, tuneful waltz in A major composed by Danny Kuaana the previous year. Byrd and the Islanders’ rendition appears to be the only recording of Kuaana’s tune, which required two takes to master. Unusually, the song begins with the chorus (sung by Danny Kuaana, George Ku, Al McIntire, and Mel Peterson), while Peterson alone sings the two verses. Byrd contributes a four-bar introduction and also plays an eight-bar break between the second chorus and second verse. As the song progresses, Byrd becomes more active during the verses, supplying doleful-sounding “sighs” to highlight such Peterson-sung lines as “memories will always haunt me” and “strains of guitars will taunt me.”

Nani Hawaii was released as a 78 rpm/45 rpm album (Mercury A-83) shortly after Labor Day 1950, but “I Regret to Say Aloha” had been issued as a single roughly a month earlier as Mercury 6264 (coupled with “Maui Chimes,” recorded next, as the “B” side). A review of the coupling ran in the August 5, 1950 issue of *Billboard*. Strangely, the reviewer was struck by the instrumental portions of the recording but not the vocals, opining that “Byrd, one of the top steel men in the country field, tries his luck in a pop recording of a Hawaiian-flavored ditty. His guitar ork [orchestra] is stellar. Vocalizing is passable, as is diskling [recording quality].”

The next tune recorded was “Maui Chimes,” a traditional “showoff vehicle” for steel guitarists with the theme played almost entirely in harmonics. The melody upon which “Maui Chimes” is based has a long and somewhat confusing history. The tune began life as the American children’s song “My Boat is Sailing,” apparently introduced to Hawaii by Nineteenth Century missionaries. T. Malcolm Rockwell’s *Hawaiian and Hawaiian Guitar Records: 1891-1960* discography lists two instrumental recordings of the tune, a 1928 rendering by Johnny Noble’s Hawaiians Featuring the Burrows Trio (with David N. Burrows on steel guitar) and a 1932 “hillbilly” cover made in Richmond, Indiana by James Brown and Ken Landon (aka The Two Islanders, with Brown on steel).

On Maui in the late 1800s, a reverend Samuel Kapu (apparently active in the United Church of Christ) wrote new Hawaiian lyrics for “My Boat is Sailing,” praising Maui. Kapu titled his new creation “Maui No Ka Oi” (translated “there is none better than Maui”). Sol Ho’opi’i was one of several acts who recorded “Maui No Ka Oi.” His February 1936 rendition with Bob Cutter on vocals featured two electric steel guitarists, with the second steel player probably Dick McIntire (Al McIntire’s oldest brother).

The “Maui Chimes” entry in the recently revised and updated *Hawaiian Music and Musicians*—originally written by George Kanahale and revised by John Berger—postulates that “it seems likely that ... ‘Maui No Ka Oi’ was



Byrd's backup musicians for the Nani Hawaii recordings: (l. to r.) Al McIntire, Danny Kuaana, Mel Peterson and George Ku.

adopted first by [Hawaiian] slack key guitarists and then by steel guitarists,” who—in this author’s view—were likely the ones who changed the title to ‘Maui Chimes’.” Kanahale and Berger add that “the main reason for [the melody’s] ... popularity is [the] ... chiming or bell effect [produced via harmonics, which are rendered whenever the tune is played].” Kanahale/Berger add that the [triadic] melody [which outlines the tonic and dominant chords in the key] lends itself to long solo passages of chimes [aka harmonics].” Alan L. Akaka relates in the liner notes of the Cord/Hana Ola CD *History of Hawaiian Steel Guitar* (HOCD-34000) that “‘Maui Chimes’ is commonly played with finger harmonics on open strings in a major-key tuning.”

The oldest recording of “Maui Chimes” in Rockwell’s discography is a recording Sol Ho’opi’i made with his Novelty Trio in March 1927 titled simply “Chimes.” Portuguese-Hawaiian steel player Frank Ferera was the next to record the melody, as “Maui Chimes,” waxing it on four different occasions in 1928-1929.

The recording of “Maui Chimes” which influenced young Jerry Byrd the most was the version waxed by Dick McIntire in Los Angeles for Decca on June 3, 1939 (with Dick’s Harmony Hawaiians backing quartet, probably including brother Al on string bass and Danny Kuaana on ukulele). As Byrd explained in *It Was a Trip*, “Dick McIntire was my idol when I was learning to play [the steel guitar].” Byrd speaks of listening to McIntire on regular radio broad-

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A signed publicity photo of the great Dick McIntire, taken around 1940. (Courtesy of John Marsden)

NANI HAWAII Continued from Page 13

casts and purchasing his 78 rpm recordings (along with those of Sam Koki and Andy Iona), which he played in the basement of his Lima, Ohio home on a “crank-console Victrola” he had cut in half so it could be set on a table. Byrd explained that “I would play these records over and over, running them at half-speed to catch the slightest inflection of every phrase.”

The Columbia 78 rpm label for Sol Ho‘opi‘i’s recording of “Maui Chimes.” (Courtesy of the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University)



In a fall 1982 radio interview on Harry B. Soria, Jr.’s “Territorial Airwaves” program on Honolulu’s KCCN, Byrd—elaborating on his admiration for Dick McIntire’s playing—related that “[it] had that indefinable something that affected me more than [the other steel players of the ‘30s and ‘40s]. ... He would ‘snap’ a note off ... or two or three notes, and then he’d go very legato and slide ... into the next one, and his change-of-pace [was very effective]—he rocked you back and forth with his playing; he would lead you up one corridor and then turn on you, take you down another [and] change moods; his expression and his taste was—to me, [and] still [is]—impeccable.”

Later in the interview, Byrd added that “[with] Dick, you never heard any pick noise in his playing, it’s just clean sound and ultimate good taste.”

Byrd related in *It Was a Trip* that “[unfortunately] I never got to meet [Dick McIntire as] ... he passed away only months after we did the [*Nani Hawaii*] album.” (McIntire actually died on June 20, 1951, roughly seventeen months later.) Byrd added that “I did two of his recorded masterpieces, ‘Maui Chimes’ and ‘Hilo March’ [on *Nani Hawaii*], [and] both [performances were] dedicated to him.”

The Decca 78 rpm label for Dick McIntire’s version of “Maui Chimes” recorded in Los Angeles on June 3, 1939. (Courtesy of John Marsden)



McIntire’s June 3, 1939 cover of “Maui Chimes” was—like Sol Hoopi‘i’s 1927 debut recording—in A major. McIntire recorded the tune at a moderate tempo of roughly 92 beats per minute (just a tad slower than Ho‘opi‘i’s). McIntire’s recording consists of four sixteen-bar sections with a modulation to D major in the last section, effecting an unusual ending outside the home key. McIntire offers plenty of harmonics during the recording (as well as a bit of early “fuzz tone” in the second section, effected by overdriving his amplifier). In the last two sections, following Ho‘opi‘i’s lead, McIntire segues directly into the old military bugle call “Taps”; the transition is a smooth one, as the all-triadic melody of the “lights out” call also invites harmonics playing. In the last section, McIntire suddenly slows the tempo down to around 66 beats per minute (to perhaps effect the “end of the day” suggested by “Taps”).

Byrd—in his cover a little over ten-and-a-half years later (which also begins in A major)—speeds the tempo up slightly to roughly 116 beats per minute. In the second section, Byrd provides an “octave-distorted” version of the melody not found in either the Ho‘opi‘i or McIntire recordings. Byrd

The Mercury 78 rpm label for Jerry Byrd’s January 1950 cover of “Maui Chimes,” which owed much to Dick McIntire’s classic rendering a decade earlier.



inserts a modulation to E major during the second eight bars of “Taps” before briefly returning to A major and then concluding, like McIntire, in the key of D. At the close, Byrd opts for a moderate *ritardando* unlike McIntire’s more pronounced slowing of the tempo.

Perhaps the author has been teaching his college-level history of blues, jazz, and rock music class too long, but to his ear, Kuaana, Peterson, and Ku’s rhythmic accompaniment sounds as if it is about to break into the “hambone rhythm” (aka the Bo Diddley beat) at any moment (*changa-tanga, changa-tanga chang chang*). One notes that the release of Diddley’s “Bo Diddley,” which popularized the rhythm in 1950s rock ‘n’ roll, was still over five years away, although the rhythmic pattern had begun sneaking into rhythm and blues recordings in the mid-to-late 1940s.

With harmonics being notoriously difficult to render clearly, it is perhaps no surprise to learn that it took five takes for Byrd to record “Maui Chimes” to his satisfaction. *Billboard*’s August 5, 1950 reviewer described Byrd’s cover as a “traditional Hawaiian up-tempo ditty reminiscent of the army retreat [the reviewer’s erroneous description of “Taps”] [which] is played spiritedly on this instrumental side ...”

Byrd and the Hawaiians next recorded “Little Lani Jo,” a delightful tune in A

major utilizing the old “soft shoe” dance rhythm. Kuaana and Byrd assembled the song to honor Jerry and Thelma Byrd’s infant daughter, Lani Jo, then roughly six months old, having been born back on Independence Day 1949 (“tiny little baby blue eyes, just as lovely as the blue skies ... Little Lani Jo”).

Amazingly, Byrd, Kuaana, and the Islanders mastered the tune in only one take. Kuaana sings high falsetto vocals (with Peterson, Ku, and McIntire on backing vocals) while Byrd provides a four-bar introduction, an eight-bar break and a prominent concluding glissando. Kuaana, Peterson, and Ku can be heard providing a solid quarter-note ukulele and guitar beat throughout.

According to Michel Ruppli’s *The Mercury Labels: The 1945-1956 Era*, “Little Lani Jo” was released as a single coupled with “Hilo March,” the last tune recorded at the *Nani* sessions (as Mercury 6267). To infer from an advertisement in the *Lima [Ohio] News* of August 20, 1950, the coupling had been released on 78 rpm by that date (with “Little Lani Jo” as the “B” side).

Around February 1953, the Mena Moeria Minstrels—a Dutch and Indonesian vocal group led by Indonesian electric steel guitarist Rudy Wairata (1929-1981)—recorded a charming doo-wop-influenced cover of “Little Lani Jo” in Amsterdam on the Omega



Indonesian singer Ming Luhulima, who sang on the Mena Moeria Minstrels’ 1953 cover of Jerry Byrd’s “Little Lani Jo.”

label, with ukulele player Ming Luhulima on falsetto vocals. (Luhulima hailed from the Maluku Islands, formerly the Spice Islands.) Like many “doo wop” recordings (e.g., “Earth Angel” and “In the Still of the Night”), Wairata’s version begins with a standard I–vi–ii–V introduction, which includes vocables (nonsense syllables). The middle of the recording features Wairata playing an eight-bar steel solo.

If dates at the Amazon website are correct, three recordings of “Little Lani Jo” made since 1991 are currently available, including renditions by the Trio Kailua and George Kulokaho & his Island Serenaders. The Paris-based Trio Kailua’s instrumental cover in C major features Jacques Thierry offering a mellow rendition of Byrd and Kuaana’s melody throughout, backed by his bassist son and a rhythm guitarist from the Cape Verde Islands.

Thanks to John D. Marsden for supplying the author with a tape of Jerry Byrd’s fall 1982 KCCN interview with Harry B. Soria, Jr. Information on Mercury’s ten- and twelve-inch LPs of the 1950s was drawn from Michel Ruppli’s *The*

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The Mercury 78 rpm label for Jerry Byrd’s 1950 recording of “I Regret to Say Aloha.”



The Mercury 78 rpm label for Jerry Byrd’s 1950 recording of “Little Lani Jo.”



“Getting to Know You...”

Meet Steel Guitarist Chris Templeton

Chris Templeton is one of those guys who everywhere seems to have had his finger on the pulse of steel guitar in its many forms—a lover and player of steel guitar styles past and present with a strong take on where it could go in the future based on his own unique creations. He is a reminder that a true steel professional of any stripe must at some level remain a student of the instrument and its many possibilities. Here’s a little taste of the “steel guitar gospel according to Chris Templeton.” Take it away, Chris...

I’ve been very fortunate to have experienced many aspects of the steel guitar world—meeting many of its players and my heroes, steel guitar builders and fans of the instrument, both pedal steel and non-pedal and Hawaiian steel. This has both inspired me and pushed me to want to innovate.

Getting Started on Steel Guitar

Three events set me on my own steel guitar path in the early seventies in Cambridge, Massachusetts where I was born (1958) and grew up. First, seeing Lucky Oceans playing pedal steel with Asleep at the Wheel in Cambridge, which had a thriving music scene in the 1960s and early ‘70s. Second, in 1971 when I bought a used Vega lap steel and a matching amp at the local pawnshop (the amp matched the case of the guitar). Third, when I had the good fortune to find a treasure trove of about twenty steel guitar records at a used record store. Many of recordings featured pedal steel players, but one artist who caught my ear was Jerry Byrd. I was just amazed at his tone and what the steel guitar did for the music I heard.

By 1979, I was working at a sporting goods store in New Mexico, and we would often play records in the shop. Ry Cooder always got a lot of plays. One of those records was *The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band* with Ry playing on it. Two of my favorite tracks are “Moonlight Lady” and “Blue Hawaiian Moonlight,” which featured Gabby’s steel playing. At the time I was playing dobro with a group called Buskers Union using a round-neck metal dobro with a raised nut.

In early 1979 I bought a one-way ticket to Kaua’i where I worked on a green pepper and papaya farm and met some Hawaiian people who introduced me to a lot of popular Hawaiian music such as the Cazimero Brothers, Cecilio and Kapono, The Beamer Brothers and The Sons of Hawaii.

I injured my back on the farm and returned to the mainland and began playing pedal steel with a local group as well



Steel guitarist Chris Templeton demonstrating his “Tapper” pedal steel, which shows the keyboard-like nature of the technique.

as sit-ins and fill-ins with various groups in the Boston area and around New England. Unlike today, the music scene was jumping and you could often find work Tuesday through Saturday and even on some Sundays. (From what I understand, the pay rate for most jobs hasn’t gone up since then and available work has decreased considerably.) I played a used Marlen single-neck pedal steel that was not very good mechanically and usually played the Vega lap steel on the rock ‘n’ roll songs.

It was a great time for the steel guitar with newsletters and publications like *Guitar Player* magazine featuring regular articles by Jeff Newman, Buddy Emmons and Tom Bradshaw.

A fantastic development for me was attending Dewitt (“Scotty”) Scott’s International Steel Guitar Convention in 1981 in St. Louis. It was such a thrill to see, hear and meet many of the top players and most of the steel guitar manufacturers who had booths around the periphery of the convention hall. Most any kind of music can be heard at Scotty’s conventions, and at the time Hawaiian music was a big feature. Jerry Byrd was seen at as the king of the steel guitar without pedals, and Buddy Emmons, king of the pedal steel. I worked for Scotty at several of the conventions and one year for Tom Bradshaw.

The Byrd and Emmons Connection

They say that when you get Hawaiian sand in your shoes, you will always return to the Islands. I returned for two “Jerry Byrd Tours” organized by Scotty in 1985 and 1986. The tours consisted of hanging out with Jerry, hearing him at his Halekulani Hotel gig, and culminating with his ho‘olaule‘a concert, which also featured other notable players such as Billy Hew Len, Barney Isaacs, Alan Akaka, Greg Sardinha, Casey Olsen, Tony Ohtsuka, Bob Brozman and

others. I decided to move to Kaua'i in 1987 and played pedal steel for several country groups. I also played for Leilani's Keiki Hula Halau and played and toured Japan with Kapu Kinimaka's hula group.

Jerry Byrd often spoke of Japan as his favorite place to play. I met quite a few pedal steel players and Hawaiian players in Japan and many of their fans. Some I count as friends up to this day.

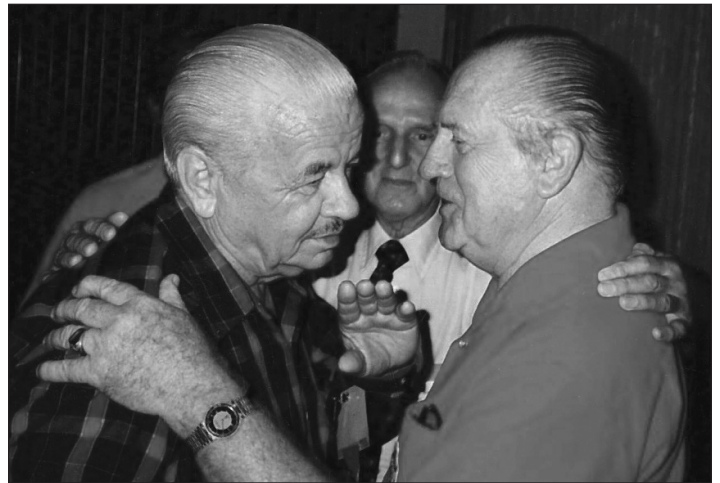
Here are some pointers that came from Jerry that I think are essential for steel guitar playing:

- Don't use your shoulder when applying vibrato. (He used to slap my shoulder to remind me!)
- Don't bend at the wrist when executing forward and reverse slants. When doing a reverse slant, push the "heel" of the bar out with the thumb.
- Hit a note first, then apply vibrato as a singer would. (I've noticed that some slide players start out with a full vibrato, perhaps to mask tuning problems.)
- Remember that as you go further up the neck, the frets get closer together, so your vibrato should also be narrower.

Jerry also used what he called the "p-tah" technique, which involves muting the string that was just played with the tip of the middle finger of the bar hand when moving to lower strings, or with the edge of that finger when moving to higher strings. This is done with the bar mostly in the "tilt" position and provides a crisp, seamless sound reminiscent of the "glottal stop" (or yodel-like sound) Hawaiian singers get when they go into their falsetto voice.

Another Jerry Byrd innovation: complex chord voicings using forward and reverse slants, especially with the C6th tuning. The beauty of using a bar with a "bullet nose" is that you can get three-note chords with the top notes at the same fret and the bottom note at a lower fret. The technique—

A late '80s shot of Scotty (left) and wife Mary, Buddy Emmons and wife Peggy at dinner in St. Louis after a show at the VFW hall.



Speedy West (left) and Jerry Byrd catching up at Scotty's convention in the early '90s. (L.T. Zinn pictured in the background).

for the faint of heart—was developed and used by Jerry Byrd to great effect allowing him to "tune" notes that would ordinarily be out of tune by correctly placing of the bullet tip between the two upper strings—the so-called Jerry Byrd split slant.

Although I have a fondness for Hawaiian steel, I also love the pedal steel. I spent a lot of time in Nashville and was fortunate to learn from and spend time with Buddy Emmons. I worked at Bobbe Seymour's Steel Guitar Nashville shop around 1990, and toured with and played pedal steel for Marty Haggard, Merle's son. Regarding pedal steel playing in general, I became increasingly aware of the tendency to overuse the standard "A" and "B" pedals. All too often, players seem to use them to "buy time" until the next idea comes along, especially during solos.

The "Tapper" Project

Around this time I met instrument designer, Ned Steinberger, at a club in Nashville. He introduced me to the tapping technique for standard guitar, which led to the design and development of what I call the "Tapper." The Tapper is a pedal steel guitar with a couple of important differences—the fretboard has real frets like a standard guitar and the fretboard is raised up close to the strings. Tapping is done by striking the strings behind the frets with the fingertips of both hands, which eliminates the need for right hand picking. A mute, often a cloth draped over the first fret, is used to dampen unwanted noise. Tapping is effective for playing very fast single-note lines and allows melodic freedom that would otherwise be impossible to achieve. The pedals and knee levers provide the ability to bend notes precisely and to change tunings, which also provides symmetry for tapping.

One of the things that I don't like about the tapping technique is that without picking, tapping can sound "short of

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breath.” I often use a compressor and sometimes an overdrive or fuzz unit, which remedies this for me.

Along with tapping, the standard guitar technique of fretting and picking can also be used.

In an early incarnation of the Tapper, I used my Dekley pedal steel with a raised fretboard made by Nashville luthier, Joe Glaser. With able advice and assistance from Tom Bradshaw, I installed the fretboard with foam and Allen screws to make the height adjustable. Although this design was somewhat adequate, without a compensated bridge there were some tuning problems. My relationship with Ned Steinberger and his interest in steel guitar and the Tapper concept, led to his designing a raised fretboard for my Sierra pedal steel with a second compensated bridge, which solved most of the tuning issues.

Ned is an amazing man, and I am so thankful for him designing the Tapper and freely sharing his ideas.

Two other people who influenced me in pursuing the raised fretboard idea for steel guitar were steel guitarist Gene Fields and guitarist Kenneth “Thumbs” Carlisle. Gene, creator of the GFI steel guitar line, built a pedal steel with a raised fretboard, but it didn’t have a second compensated bridge. “Thumbs,” who played at several of Scotty’s conventions, played standard guitar flat on his lap.

Touring with Robert Randolph

I first met “sacred steeler” Robert Randolph through Chuck Campbell of the Campbell Brothers group, whom I contacted after seeing an article about them in *Living Blues* magazine in the late 1990s.

For those who aren’t familiar with the genre, Sacred Steel is a remarkable steel guitar style within an African-American gospel tradition that developed among a group of Pentecostal churches in the 1930s and remained largely “underground” until recent years. The steel guitar replaced the traditional organ in church services and evolved into a soulful, sometimes hypnotic voice that became an integral part of the worship service.

When I first visited Chuck in Rochester, New York, he took me to such a church service. Along with the church songs, there was a lot of “call and response” done with the steel responding to the preacher. Sacred Steel has a unique vocal quality to it and is often played on one string.

On one occasion while visiting Chuck, he said something like, “You have to meet this guy Robert Randolph. He is amazing.” I spoke with Robert on the phone several times while he was working as a paralegal in New Jersey. We made arrangements to meet at his church, and then we went to his father’s house in Maplewood, New Jersey. Afterward, we went to my motel room and set up our pedal steels. I was



Sacred steeler Robert Randolph having some fun on the road in 2002.

absolutely amazed by his raw talent, both with his bar movement and the dexterity of his picking hand.

He did several gigs in New York City and his name began to spread around. Before long he was signed on with management and a booking agent. One day he called me and said that a tour was being set up and that he wanted to hire me as his guitar tech. Although I had recently been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, I was up for the job and went on tour with Robert in 2002. It was such a thrill to see his career take off and see the level of notoriety he has achieved since.

An interesting addendum to the topic of Sacred Steel: Steel guitar “rules” of technique developed by Jerry Byrd and others, like most rules, are often broken, especially when it comes to other styles of music. For example, sacred steeler Chuck Campbell would sometimes turn his bullet bar around so that so that the butt end (with the hard edge) would catch strings, “sounding” them without picking—effective when playing fast passages.

Concluding Thoughts

Although I’ve spent a good deal of my career “off the beaten path,” Hawaiian steel guitar is still something I come back to again and again. The active players I know of on O’ahu are: Jeff Au Hoy, Casey Olsen, Greg Sardinha, Bobby Ingano and Alan Akaka. On Kaua’i: Ernie Palmeira (he may have retired by this time), Jess Montgomery and Ken Emerson, who is mostly on the mainland these days. Ken is outstanding, playing mostly acoustic steel guitar in the style of Sol Ho’opi’i. On the mainland, John Ely, a favorite of mine, teaches a full schedule via Skype and plays Hawaiian style at conventions and winter “warm-ups” in the Great White North.

Hawaii has gone through a lot of changes over the years, and although I haven’t been back in some time, I believe the Aloha Spirit is alive in the Islands—in its music, its chants and especially, the smiles on the faces of its people. ■



2014 Festival Photos

(Clockwise from upper left) At last year's successful Maui Steel Guitar Festival: Austin, Texas steeler Tony Locke; Jack Aldrich on steel with Addison Ching (left), Kaipō Asing and Derrick Mau on backup; a promo shot of Gary Aiko, Alan Akaka and Kaipō Asing. At last year's Waikiki Steel Guitar Festival, students of Alan Akaka's Ke Kula Mele School of Hawaiian Music: Dennis Isa (left), Quincy Maka'awa'awa, Sid Pang, Luana Macariola, and Keen Ching; and Sharon Sawdey (left) and Gale Warshawsky.



E Komo Mai! Welcome, New Members

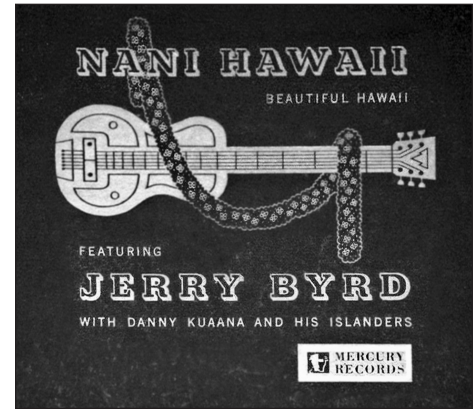
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OVERSEAS

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The 78 rpm cover of Byrd's Nani Hawaii, also released in 45 rpm format in 1950.

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Treasurer's Report

(as of February 28, 2015)

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| General Fund | \$10,222.36 |
| Scholarship Fund | \$14,527.53 |
| OTS EFCU CD* | \$10,000.00 |
| Japan Account | \$ 2,267.00 |
| Grand Total | \$37,016.89 |

* *The John L. Muir bequeathal*

It's Dues Time Again!

Remember, HSGA's membership year begins on July 1, 2015. Dues are now \$30 and all issues go out 'Air Mail'.

Timi Abrigo playing steel with his mom Lanet at last year's Maui Steel Guitar Fest.



Uke Calendar

August 30, 2015—Jazz & Blues 'Ukulele Cruise

Seven-day Bermuda cruise featuring 'ukulele workshops on all styles for players at all levels. Contact Gerald Ross for details at: UkeTone Records, P.O. Box 3245, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Event website: www.bermudaukecruise.com.

May 22-25, 2015—Ashokan Center Uke Fest

Join Gerald Ross in the Catskills at a weekend 'ukulele retreat for players of all skill levels. Workshops covering all styles taught by Gerald, Marcy Marxer, Joel Eckhaus, Ben Hassenger, Heidi Swedberg, Paul Hemmings and Ruthy Ungar. For more information go to the website at: AshokanCenter.org.

NANI HAWAII Continued from Page 15

Mercury Labels: The 1945-1956 era; *other discographical information was again taken from T. Malcolm Rockwell's Hawaiian and Hawaiian Guitar Recordings: 1891-1960 CD-ROM. Dr. Corliss Johnson taught at South Dakota State University from 1972-2005. His observations on post-war recording were taken from his course outline "Blues, Jazz, and Rock: A Study in Styles" (used in his course of the same name). Thanks to Les Cook for supplying information on the Trio Kailua and a copy of their "Little Lani Jo" cover.*

On the afternoon of March 7, I received the sad news of the passing of Joe Fothergill in Dayton, Ohio. Joe—a cousin of country singer Ernie Lee, who recorded some fifty-four sides with Jerry Byrd between 1947 and 1953—was incredibly helpful to me when I was writing my "Jerry Byrd's RCA Recordings with Ernie Lee" series, which appeared on these pages over the last couple of years. Joe very freely provided me with photos, personal interviews, radio interviews, radio programs, and recordings of not only Ernie Lee with Jerry Byrd, but also other musicians in the Lee/Byrd "circle." Joe's observations on hillbilly music of the late 1940s and early 1950s and the role of the steel guitar therein will be sorely missed. ■