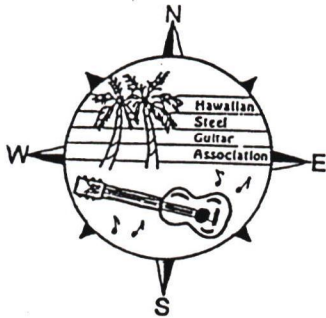


# HSGA QUARTERLY

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by The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association

Volume 10, Issue 36

FALL 1994



Alan L. Akaka, President  
Jerry Byrd, Vice President  
Edward Punua, Secretary-Treasurer

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

J.T. Gallagher, New York  
George Lake, Canada  
John Marsden, England  
Frank Miller, Arizona  
Lorene Ruymar, Canada  
Don Woods, Michigan

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association is registered as a non-profit organization in the State of Hawai'i, and as a social organization under IRS tax code 501(c)(7). Its purpose is to develop a global communications network of players and lovers of Hawaiian traditional music as performed on all types of steel guitars and related instruments.

## MEMBERSHIP

Open to all steel guitar players and non-players around the world who support the promotion and perpetuation of Hawaiian steel guitar music. Annual dues are US\$24. Membership year begins July 1. Members receive HSGA Quarterly, and other group benefits.

## MAILING INFORMATION

Mail all correspondence and submissions to HSGA Quarterly c/o:  
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Honolulu, HI, 96828-1373, USA.  
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## NOW IT'S OFFICIAL; HSGA'S 1994-95 OFFICER'S & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Many of you voted by mail-in proxy ballot and those who attended the Joliet Convention General Membership Meeting voted in person. Here's who you elected (and two others whose re-election or replacement comes next year) to "run the show" for 1994-95:

(as pictured above, left to right from the top) Row 1: Jerry Byrd, Vice President; Edward Punua, Secretary, Treasurer; Alan Akaka, President. Middle Row: Frank Miller, re-elected to Board of Directors; Lorene Ruymar, elected to Board; Don Woods, re-elected to Board.

Bottom Row: George "Keeki" Lake, J. T. Gallagher, and newly-elected John Marsden of England.

In coming issues we'll take some space for biographies, because not only have you chosen some great steel players to manage your club, you've elected folks who've *already* given HSGA major amounts of their time, talent and special Hawaiian-style music zest to make our club the very best in the world! Many mahalos to you. You should be very proud of your membership!



# BOARD MEETING REPORT

*(This report is compiled from Minutes respectfully submitted by Edward Punua, Acting Secretary-Treasurer.)*

On July 30, 1994, the HSGA Board of Directors met, via telephone conference line. Alan Akaka presided, and the meeting was attended by Jerry Byrd, Edward Punua, George "Keoki" Lake and Frank Miller. J.T. Gallagher and Don Woods were "on the road", and therefore unable to attend. Marjorie Scott was asked to sit in, to report on Membership.

Minutes of the March 5 Board Meeting were unanimously accepted as read. Edward Punua gave the Treasurer's report for the club year, July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994. An excess expenditure of \$5,696 over income for the year was noted, much of it due to administrative expense for office rent and production of the HSGA Quarterly. Ed reported that a new bookkeeping system is being installed to provide more accurate financial reporting and budget forecasting. HSGA will be applying for a Federal ID number and non-profit 501(c)(3) designation, during the '94-'95 club year. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read.

Jerry Byrd reported a \$200 donation from HSGA member, Hiroshi Takagi, for the Scholarship Fund, and at least one student who is a serious prospect for a scholarship. Marjorie Scott reported that a little better than 50% of the members had paid their '94-'95 membership dues; a small group of 1992-93 members, who did not renew for '93-'94 will be contacted to determine whether they wish to re-join, or should be permanently deleted from HSGA's database. A roster of 1994-95 paid members will be available to HSGA members, after October 1. \$1.50 will be charged, to cover first class postage of roster.

President Akaka reported that "more and more people are becoming aware of steel guitar", and that the June 20 Steel Guitar Ho'olaule'a produced an immediate seven new members, with some applications still pending. He thanked Donna

Miller for being at an HSGA Courtesy Table to answer questions and give out Membership Applications and Quarterlies. He also announced a 2-part, 2-hour concert to be performed at Ala Moana/Center Stage on September 17, the beginning of Aloha Festival Week on Oahu. Alan asked and received Board approval for Lorene Ruymar to act as President Pro-Temp at the General Meeting and Election, during the August Joliet convention, as both he and Jerry Byrd will be absent. George Lake requested Alan to reserve the Kapi'olani Bandstand for the usual HSGA steel concert, during the spring '95 Honolulu convention.

Under New Business, Board members reviewed the draft of the revised HSGA Bylaws. President Akaka noted that they were more comprehensive than the previous Bylaws because after HSGA receives its Federal non-profit tax status, "organizations to whom HSGA applies for major project funding and grants will undoubtedly ask for copies of our Bylaws, to see if we run ourselves in a businesslike manner." A motion to accept the revised Bylaws with one minor modification to "Article X-Audit" was unanimously approved. The Board directed that the new Bylaws go into effect following the General Meeting and Election, in August.

The meeting was adjourned following a decision to hold the next Board Meeting on Saturday, October 29.

**May Day is HSGA "PLAY Day" for HSGA in Hawai'i!  
HSGA CONVENTION  
Sun., Apr. 30, 1995 through  
Thurs. May 4.  
REGISTRATION FORMS  
FOR HSGA HONOLULU  
CONVENTION -  
pages 18 & 19  
Discounted hotel rooms at  
Queen Kapi'olani, Honolulu  
are LIMITED. Reserve NOW!**

## BUY & SELL

**WANTED TO BUY:** One of those shiny old National tricone steel guitars, the older the better, but in good shape, please. Contact Lorene Ruymar, 2090 West 44th Ave., Vancouver, BC Canada V6M 2E9. Phone: (604) 263-8944.

**FOR SALE** large collection of Hawaiian LPs and 78s. Send your "want" list with an SASE;. Great "find" for the true collector! Contact: Alvin Sydnor, 806 Meetinghouse Rd., Boothwyn, PA 19061; phone: (610) 497-2838.

**STEEL FRYPAN/STAND FOR SALE** - 8-string, JB short scale (22-1/2") frypan with hard case. Limited edition #43. New condition. \$850 + shipping. Also heavy duty frypan stand, \$75 + shipping. OR trade above for new condition double eight non-pedal with case. Exchange photos. Joe Boudreau, 33732 Harvest Way, Lake Elsinore, CA 92532; phone (909) 244-9262.

**WHADDU'YA KNOW - A WAY TO "FACELIFT" YOUR OLD LPS!** "Now you can make many old LP records sound like new", according to an LA Times article, sent to us by **Brian Littman**. The "Nitty Gritty Record Cleaning Sytem" has apparently been a music trade secret for some time. Randy Cooley, who owns a small Santa Monica California shop specializing in upscale audio equipment and used records, made the "insider's secret" public. Cooley is quoted as saying "because of industry hype, people assume LPs aren't as good as CDs, so they get rid of them, or never play them." While it's good for his business, he says "it also makes me sad, because people are selling their emotions", and some music is available only on vinyl.

The cleaning machine "can't do anything for scratches or wear, but it will take off the accumulated dust and grit that gum up record grooves and interfere with sound." Here's how it works: "the record is doused with a special fluid and scrubbed with a brush whose microscopic fibers loosen all the firm, grease, dust, mold and carbon fibers in the grooves. Then the record is rotated over a vacuum motor that sucks every





# COCONUT WIRE



**Who was that playing upright bass at R. Alex Anderson's 100th birthday party:?** If you guessed **Jerry Byrd**, you're right! Playing with Auntie Irmgard Aluli and "Puamana". Of the party, Alan Yoshioka, of Harry's Music, tells us "only R. Alex's songs were played — and that took up most of the June 6 party — except for one piece by Andy Cummings. Mr. Anderson requested 'Waikiki'". And of course, we



Top: Jerry Byrd "auditions" on string bass

Bottom: Hundreds of flower leis for R. Alex's 100th birthday. (Seen with daughter, Pam.)

## BUY & SELL - continued

groove dry and clean." Adaptors are available for 45 and 78 rpm records. Expensive, but worth it for a real collector. Two small U. S. manufacturers make them: VPI (Cliffwood, New Jersey) priced from \$450 to \$900, and Nitty Gritty Record Care Products (Montclair, New Jersey) priced from \$239 to \$759. Both cleaners were reviewed in the May 1994 issue of "Stereophile" magazine.

all sang "Mele Kalikimaka". It was a star-studded list of entertainers who paid tribute to the grand old man, a true Hawaiian Living Treasure: Nina Keali'iwahamana, Martin Denny, Boyce Rodrigues, Ed Kenney and Beverly Noa, Joe and Shirley Recca among them. Said Alan, of Bev and Shirley "those ladies truly have lovely hula hands — beautiful and expressive of the songs — rare these days."

There were 200 well-wishers piling leis so high, that the coffee table in front of the sofa on which Mr. Anderson was seated was soon hidden under a garden of flowers. "He was such a delight", Alan relates. "He never once left the party, and continually showed his appreciation by waving his hand, or conducting the songs from his seat, and he never missed a beat, although he didn't say a word!" When Harry B. Soria, Jr. finished emcee-ing the entertainment, and most folks had left, Anderson's family - at least twenty people from *keikis* to *kupunas* in age, and from all over the Islands and the mainland, formed a circle and sang him a personal "Happy Birthday". "Then at the very end" Alan said, "when everyone was gone, Mr. Anderson finally spoke. 'can I get a glass of water?' he asked. (HSGA is honored to have R. Alex Anderson as a member).

**Calling all Texas members:** Steel player Paul Price of Richmond Texas needs to join HSGA, considering his recent phone call to Lorene Ruymar. He said "heard Aloha Calls (*sic*) on short-wave radio direct from Hawaii, and there was a steel guitarist who played a solo which made me just about fall apart, he was so good. Can you find out who he is?" Paul was, of course, referring to our own **Casey Olsen!** Paul told Lorene he'd been playing Hawaiian style all his life, but never heard anything like that before. Round him up and head him in, padnahs! He's got a full scale Hawaiian steel experience coming to him! If you're close enough to call him, the number is (713) 342-2071.

**And what HSGA steel player is now**

**playing rhythm guitar a la Freddie Green?** None other than **George "Keoki" Lake**. Steel traitor? NOT! Hawaiian music is Lake's first love; he is also "a passionate lover of the Big Band era — Glenn Miller, et al." His original band of nine musicians, put together in 1991, has now mushroomed into an 18 piece orchestra "which has this town buzzing". George has the "Society Act" formed as a foundation, with the goal of sponsoring young jazz musicians through college, and he is rightfully very proud of his group. "Can you imagine an 18 piece orchestra of 5 saxes, 5 trombones, 4 trumpets and 4 rhythm having 12 bookings in just a four month period? This is the proudest accomplishment I have ever done in my musical career," Lake writes. "I cannot believe what has happened ... man, this band has a great sound!" As a result of city support for bringing back the sounds of the 40's to 60's, Lake's efforts are getting good local press, and he has made a few local TV talk show appearances. Now, what about steel? Not to worry, luvs, if you travel to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada to hear George's group, you may soon find yourself listening to "Moonlight Cocktail" with a steel guitar solo in the middle!

**Many mahalos to Andrew (Andy) Volk, one of HSGA's newer members** for his consistently interesting contributions to your Quarterly. (*Only "the Ruymar" knows what it takes to put this newsletter together!*) In June, Andy surprised us with "Well, we have a new baby at our house (Gregory, age 6 wks.) so my steel playing, as well as my correspondence, is definitely falling by the wayside." NOT! Congratulations Andy ... you ARE, of course, playing nothing but steel guitar to those young ears until his hands are big enough to hold a bar, right??? Remember HSGA's goal to encourage *young* steel players.

**Vivian Bangs got another nice response for her "thank you for using steel guitar" letter.** Frederick Orr, VP and GM of the Sheraton Moana Surftrider called her letter "a wonderful

*Continued on pg. 7*



# JOLIET: HSGA'S "FAMILY GATHERING"

*EDITOR'S NOTE: After reading Lorene's diary-like description of HSGA's yearly "class reunion" in Joliet, Illinois, we get a warm ohana feeling about our organization. Lots of "welcome back!", meeting and greeting NEW members and guests, talk-story, members chipping in to help each other set up, and - best of all - three full days of MUSIC! Very Hawaiian-style, folks. No wonder HSGA's convention registration and audience of guests keeps getting larger every year! If you haven't been to an HSGA convention, schedule yourselves NOW, for Honolulu, April 30-May 5, 1994 (and on to Maui). Your registration forms are on pages 18, 19, and registration deadline is March 1, 1995.*

*An afterview, by Lorene Ruymar*

Can you think of any other holiday trip you can make that will put you in contact with so many good friends, so much good music and hilarity, as you'll find when HSGA members get together? Art and I get excited about going, and this is our *eight*th year of convention!

If you've never been to one of our Joliet conventions, here's how it goes. Most people arrive the day before, on Wednesday. By dinner time, the gang's almost all there, and the waitresses in the Holiday Inn restaurant have to dodge people dodgin' them, to get the trays to the tables. Much greeting and table hopping goes on, and some of the keenest musical "nuts" have already set up and are playing the good Hawaiian style, in the corner, where the Illinois sunset radiates the sky. Our annual "gathering of the clan" has begun.

After dinner, we get serious about paying registration fees, membership renewal (if we forgot to mail it in to HQ), buying luau tickets for Saturday night, and choosing from the menu for Thursday's dinner at D'Amico's restaurant. And, while all this is going on, **Art Ruymar** and **Don Woods** are putting together the playing schedules for the next three days, **Vern Cornwall** is lining up the back-up players, and **Doug Smith**, **Barbara Kuhns** and **Floyd Alexander** are dragging in load after



*Duke Ching sets the sound of Hawai'i tone, for Joliet convention*

load of sound equipment from their van. Those three supply all our needs, and for the next three days of music sessions, keep the mics in volume and tone balance, and manage the housekeeping of the stage. Hey folks, did we ever tell you how much we love you for that?

And for post-performance evenings? Many of us gather in the bar. NOT to "drink and forget", but to talk-story and remember! Actually, the bar makes very little on HSGA-ers coffee, soft drinks and "just water", which is what most of us imbibe. We DO consume lots of "nibbles" while we chat. It's just that all the tables and chairs are ours — very few townspeople are there — so it's homey, convenient and a party where EVERYONE feels welcome to walk in and join. Music? But of course! The songs and the steel guitar go one and on, with lots taking turns on instruments. It's a sharing time for everyone: if you care to dance a hula or sing harmony,

you just DO it. Art and I always say we're only going to stay "a little while", but it's such precious fun, we're always there until they close the bar at 11 p.m.

For the three days we're in session (Thurs., Fri., Sat.) we try to get everyone in the room by 9 a.m. **Duke Ching** and **Bob Waters** did the opening ceremony - the music and the *pule* (prayer). Nobody inspires us better than Duke Ching; he sets the tone for the convention, with those seven acres of string and fretboards, and his digital wizardry brings the *aloha* spirit into the hall. John Auna and Bernie Endaya couldn't join Duke this year, and we also sorely missed the presence of Merle and Ronnie Kekuku, whose generous gifts of time, talent and friendship made our convention truly "Hawaiian". **Phil Bender** dedicated his *E Maliu Mai* (Vern Cornwall's arrangement) to the Kekukus.

So, all day long, steel guitarists take turns playing on stage with back-up crews changing around. **Frank Miller** does the emcee work, but calls on others to take over, now and then. At the door, **Donna Miller** and her crew of charming ladies keep track of registrations and sales of this and that, and make arrangements for the luau. Our lovely guest from Honolulu, **Kaleo Byrd**, helped with the desk chores. Around the back of the hall are tables with items for sale or giveaway, and deals are made while the show goes on.

This year we got smart and asked the hotel staff to serve sandwiches and coffee in the meeting room at lunch time. There's a good Bob Evans restaurant across the road, and the Holiday Inn coffee shop is open, but half of us didn't want that much food, so we just stayed right in the meeting room, and guess what happened? *Another PARTY!* **Neal Cosand** and **Rex Rieke** got to playing some really good jazz on guitar and keyboard one day; another day **Charlie Anderson** "just happened" to have his magic tricks with him, so he put on a fine show; the third day, we heard from some steel guitarists who were either too



shy or too late to get on the program, **Greg Wong** being one of them. It worked so well to stay in, that HSGA'S "Brown Bag Lunch" Party is here to stay! And at dinner time? Whether it's in the hotel, or at D'Amico's, at least six steel guitarists take turns playing. HSGA has so many excellent players, we want to hear as much as possible of each one. I'm surprised we don't set up for breakfast, too.

And where would Convention be without **Clay Savage**? He's always our professional photographer, and we do rely heavily on him. (See "Buy & Sell" for Clay's listing of available videos and featured artists.) But I do want to select a few of this year's steel artists for special mention. Our "beginners" - those who did their shaky "first" on our stage, several years ago, are now doing VERY well indeed: **Michael Beeks** (who also dances a great hula), **Ron Simpson**, **Pat Brunner**, **Al Weatherhead**. It gives great satisfaction to see them so improved, and it's a "win" for HSGA, because their dedication and steel guitar performances let us know we're doing *more* than just having fun with our "everyone's welcome to play" Convention policy.

*Bernice Honold plays a mean, swingin' steel with "Coral Islanders"*



I have taken **Dick Lloyd**'s name *off* the beginner list, because there's NOTHING he needs to do to "improve". He has arrived! His playing is superb in every way, technique, expression, volume, tone. All he needs now is to learn more and more songs. He's got **Jerry Byrd** worried already, the way he played *Estrellita*.

I am always so impressed when someone cares enough to come from a long distance. **Jess Bishop** of England gets our mahalo, and so does **Ian Ufton**. Ian's ability and willingness to play back-up on any instrument wins the approval of the great perfectionist himself, Jerry Byrd. And we almost forget that Ian is also one heck of a steel guitarist, getting better every year, it that's possible.

Several precious old National Tricone guitars appeared, in the hands of **Doug Smith** and **Frank Della Penna**. After listening to so much electric steel playing, it's so *ono* to hear the pure beauty of the original acoustic sound played in the true old style. For the "Outstanding Group" award, I'd have to pick the "Coral Sea Islanders" with **Bernice Honold** on steel, **Dick Honold** on rhythm guitar, **Deane Sullins** on 'ukulele and **Virginia Grzadzinski** on bass. I saw grey hairs on their heads when they started to play, but they really swung into it—smooth and together—and seemed to get younger and younger on stage. I'd recommend them for any sort of public performance; they'd do HSGA proud.

The last of the beautiful spirits I want to mention, who bring musical magic to our stage, is **Leonard T. Zinn**. I think we're addicted to him already, so from now on, he cannot let us down by not showing up! That man is so multi-talented in both Country and Hawaiian styles, I could go into a tizzy telling about it. On top of it all, L. T. always has room for a joke. He simply radiates the joy that is in him. (You don't have to be sour-faced to be a good Christian. Right, L.T.?)

And last and best, our Honored Guest Performer, **Owana Salazar**. A true Hawaiian princess. On stage, she ranks with the best entertainers in Hawai'i,

performing on steel, slack key guitar and as a vocalist. Owana is related to Lena Machado, one of Hawai'i's great singers, and it shows. Owana also has a warm, humorous side, as she showed us, off stage. She and the Duke and L.T. pulled off a comedy routine, ad lib, that had us in stitches most of the time. What a lady! What a musician. Come back, Owana, as many times as you can.



*Owana Salazar: Honored and many-talented Guest Artist*

Meanwhile, back stage, in the "shirt sleeves" division, many, many kudos to **Don Weber** for great publicity work both before and during Convention. As a result of Don's efforts, we had news reporters doing interviews, and a member of the "Heritage Corridor Visitors Bureau" at a counter, with promotional material. She was so impressed with our event, she joined HSGA and promises to involve "the mayor and all the king's horses" next year. HSGA got so much good publicity in the local newspapers, TV and radio, that many townspeople started drifting in to see if it was all really true! We picked up a number of new memberships, and it looks like we have a Joliet Convention team in place, that has just *started* to roll. Look for a doubling of our Convention attendance by next year.

Hearing the comments of guests who were impressed with HSGA's Convention, and our Hawaiian-style ambience and music, we all began to catch the

*Continued on pg. 11*



# RALPH KOLSIANA - *THE HIPPIEST 82 YEAR OLD AROUND!*

*Interviewed by Andy Volk*



*Ralph Kolsiana on steel and vocals with "Coral Islanders" at Tahiti Club, Santa Monica, California, 1955. Photo courtesy of Andy Volk.*

Through HSGA, I've been lucky to meet Ralph. We play music when I get to LA on business, and we've developed a warm friendship, keeping in touch by phone and letters. Somehow, the 45-year difference in our ages doesn't seem to matter, when we meet on the common ground of love for music and steel guitar.

Ralph Kolsiana is 82 now, but in spite of arthritis and eye problems, he still plays swinging, Hawaiian-style steel. He remains one of the last of the generation of musicians who helped make Hawaiian music one of the most popular styles in the world, at one time.

Born on O'ahu of Dutch, Brazilian and Peruvian heritage, Ralph was raised in Philadelphia, PA. After study in Philly with Jimmy Kahanalopua, who had a style similar to So Ho'opi'i's, Ralph went on to an incredible professional career that included recording for the RCA Bluebird label, playing on motion picture soundtracks, gigging at hundreds of clubs all over America, and rubbing shoulders with some of the greats — and the not so greats, such as Al Capone.

Chatting with Ralph is like dipping into a bottomless well of great stories and steel guitar history. We recently had a chance to speak by phone and "talk steel guitar".

**AV:** *Who were your earliest steel guitar influences?*

**RK:** My earliest influence was of course Sol Ho'opi'i. After hearing Sol, every Hawaiian band wanted to use a steel guitar. Not many people know that Hoot Gibson, the famous cowboy movie star, brought Sol out here to LA to play with his western group. That's how the western guys got onto using the steel guitar. I don't think anybody's ever covered that story. This was way, way back as I recall, in the early 20's. There weren't very many players during those days, and nobody had a native Hawaiian steel player except Hoot Gibson.

**AV:** *What other players did you listen to besides Sol Ho'opi'i?*

**RK:** Pale K. Lua, though not as much as Sol. There was another Hawaiian player in Philadelphia named Paul Kula, who wasn't with the Royal Conserva-

tory. I was influenced by Dick McIntire, Danny Stewart and Andy Iona. There was also a real good steel player from up in Connecticut — David Burrows. It was David Burrows and his "Five Hot Shots." Today, my favorite player is no longer with us, David Keli'i.

**AV:** *What kind of steel guitar did you start out with?*

**RK:** At first, I was using a steel I had converted from a spanish guitar. I cemented a post in the center under the sound hole, and attached the top from our old handcranked brass doorbell, after we got an electric bell. I screwed that bell onto the post and found I got quite a resonance out of that. I went out with a group on the Steel Pier in Atlantic City. I joined that group in about 1934. At the time, they were just coming out with the Dobros and the Nationals — wooden instruments with metal resonators.

When I first went out on Steel Pier, I still had that old wooden guitar with the raised nut and that bell inside of it! Then the instrument companies supplied all the instruments to give them public exposure, of course. We had Dobros for a while, then they came out with the Rickenbacker electrics — they were superior to anything we had before. After I had my first pancake steel, (a cast aluminum steel also nicknamed "frypan"), I got hold of a black bakelite steel with chrome plates, and I liked that a lot. I alternated between that and the pancake. I still have that first electric — it's serial number 004.

**AV:** *What kind of guitar are you playing these days ... what tunings are you using?*

**RK:** I play a 1950 double-8 Fender. E9th tuning has been my favorite for a number of years. I used E9th before I even knew what E9th was, because being an ear player, not a music reader, I discovered this tuning for myself way back around 1940. I had been using the old E7th; I kinda' stuck with it, and it's



COCO WIRE - continued from pg. 3

surprise". (Sheraton Hotels in Hawai'i, by "edict" from its Japanese owners, presents Hawaiian music with steel guitar at all of its hotels. HSGA member, Chriss Hyde is responsible for the bookings.) Come on, mainlanders, if you want to hear more steel guitar music in Waikiki, WRITE TO HVB AND THE HOTEL OWNERS! Vivian shouldn't have to do it all alone.

**"When Hawaiian music is so beautiful, why does some sound engineer ruin it with fierce volume???"** Vivian reports on the "Aloha Concert Jam", held in Carson, California this summer. "A disappointment, because much of it was Jawaiian and toneless dullsville music by a Samoan group, and I guess to make it sound better, the guy running the soundtrack kept boosting the decibels until after holding our ears for an hour, and still nearly crazy with the sound, many of us left after only 3 hours of a scheduled 7 hour program!" *Sorry, Vivian, that you missed the guest artists; you might not have enjoyed the Upcountry Maui stylings of Uncle Willie K., but the Makaha Sons is one of the best contemporary groups around — Hawaiian to the core.*

**"Another crazy Canadian to report on"**, is how Lorene Ruymar states it. It seems that HSGA member, **Ray Smith**, of Salmon Arm, drove 700 round-trip miles last May, to be certified as "A Marathon Guitarist" in the "Taking Care of Business" Music West Guitar Marathon in Vancouver, B.C. The Marathon was promoted as "our attempt to break the world records for the most guitarist playing the same song for the longest period of time." According to a newspaper report "more than 1,300 would-be guitar stars" turned out for the event which lasted 68 minutes and 40 seconds "of sheer musical mayhem — the world's largest jam session". This record-breaker will definitely make the Guinness Book of Records! Ray got two credits: oldest guitar player to attend (at age 59?) and the only Polynesian. He did it in full regalia - white pants, aloha shirt and lei, and HSGA club badge, and got some good press out of it. Ray, do you know how many other *steel* players participated?



## EASTERN ONTARIO "GOES HAWAIIAN"

by Ivan Sinclair

On July 15, Mike "Malihini" Scott and his "Hawaiianaires" highlighted the summer music festival in the picturesque Qunite region of eastern Lake Ontario, Canada.

The sweet sound of the singing steel guitar by Mike, backed by rhythm guitar, keyboard and drums, delighted the audiences with enchanting Hawaiian refrains. Two lovely native Hawaiian dancers enhanced the meanings of the music with their graceful flowing hulas.

Two performances were held in the new Prince Edward Community Centre in the city of Picton: an afternoon Tea Concert followed by the early evening Cocktail Party. Both were sold out in minutes, each to a capacity of 250 persons. The arrangement of tables, seating four or six guests, was set with white table cloths,

**We say "Farewell and Godspeed" to Harold Schmidt**, of Chilliwack, B.C., who passed on, last May. "He was one of our keenest supporters," Lorene writes. "He and his wife Verna, daughter Mary and sister Helen were there in the front row at every Hawaiian convention we ever held, and all the steel guitar meets in the Vancouver area. Harold played a very fine steel guitar, plus bass and rhythm guitar." (*Heaven has much*

coloured napkins, flowers and place settings — a pleasant surprise upon entering the hall.

The "Hawaiianaires" entertained the appreciative audience for nearly one and a half hours, nonstop, after which tea, coffee, fruit and goodies were served to the tables. Mike joined my wife and me at our table, where we guitar players gossiped over coffee for an hour. I should add that Mike's tape entitled "Hawaii Gently Swings" is great. I have not worn it out yet, but am working on it. Thank you Mike, we are all grateful to you for bringing a bit of Hawai'i to the Bay of Quinte.

(*Ed Note: For information about Mike's tape, you can write to him at: 45-C Chestnut Park Rd., Toronto, ON, Canada M4W 1W7.*

*to gain with your presence, Harold.)*

**Scrivo in Italiano, anyone?** If you do, please *kokua* (help us) to welcome our new member, Michele DiVella, of Bolzano, Italy, who understands a little (*conosco poco*) English, but cannot write it. We don't want her to miss even a morsel of our HSGA *aloha* spirit, because of language difficulties. You'll find Michele's address on the back page, among the New Members. *Mahalo!*





George "Keoki" Lake performs with Art and Lorene Ruymar at George Wiebenger's annual Hawaiian Music fete in Maple Ridge, B.C. (Photo courtesy of Vic Rittenband)

## RITTENBANDS MAKE "HOT" HAWAIIAN MUSIC TOUR

by Vic Rittenband

Summers are opportunities for Nancy and I to travel and perform. This year's mainland tour took us to Maple Ridge where we stayed with George Wiebenger, and entertained at the annual Maple Ridge steel guitar get-together, along with a number of other HSGA members, and Hawaiian music enthusiasts. This was a 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. continuous affair. Steel players participated from as far away as Edmonton Alberta, and some came up from Washington state as well.

R. KOLSIANA - Continued from pg. 6  
the one I still use today on my inside neck. On the outside neck, I've experimented with a lot of other tunings, like D9th and B11th, but since I played at the Hula Hut in Santa Monica in the 50's, I've been using C13th on the outside neck. (NOTE: Ralph's main tuning is: E,C#,G#,F#,D,B,G#E 1st-8th string.)

**AV:** Do you have any tips for beginning steel players?

**RK:** I would recommend E9th tuning because of its versatility ... being able to find harmonies and chords without jumping around too far.

**AV:** You played a very wide variety of music, not just Hawaiian, right?

**RK:** In those days, you had to play the popular tunes of the day — standards like Honeysuckle Rose, Sweet Sue, Sweet Georgia Brown, and on occasion we did (ha ha) Chinese tunes, Japanese tune, Samoan, Tahitian, even some Maori music from New Zealand — they're all Polynesian, of course. And some tunes from Fiji, which are Micronesian.

**AV:** That's an incredible range of music.

**RK:** We even learned some Hebrew songs when we played the Young Men's Hebrew Association in Brooklyn! Later on, I joined "Ida's Hawaiians" up in Reading, PA, which had many German people who loved Hawaiian music. We learned all kinds of German songs and polkas.

**AV:** You've had some unusual gigs!

**RK:** I played in the Barnum & Bailey

circus band. We traveled all through Florida and the deep south — this was back in the 30's.

**AV:** How did you come to record for RCA?

**RK:** That was in 1935. Mr. Oberheim, the agent for RCA, caught our act on Steel Pier and brought us to RCA's studios in Camden, New Jersey. (NOTE: "The Waikiki Swingsters" band included Ralph, his brother Johnny, playing Django Reinhardt-inspired lead guitar on a Gibson archtop acoustic, as well as a rhythm guitarist and upright bassist. They played a mix of hot, swing and Hawaiian-standard tunes.)

**AV:** You would record direct to acetate, wouldn't you? If you made a mistake, you'd have to stop?

**RK:** Oh yeah, we didn't have any damn rehearsal time ... we were on such a tight schedule. So we picked all the songs we were used to playing regularly, so we wouldn't have to stop. We didn't make any mistakes evidently — except my brother — a little hesitation on one take, but Oberheim didn't think it was serious, so he let it go.

**AV:** Your brother Johnny played very close to Django's style. People today are still trying to play those licks, but it was pretty unusual to hear back in the 30's.

**RK:** Yeah, Johnny came very close. He was fortunate during the war to wind up in Paris with the Army Air Corp (as it was named in those days) he had taken his guitar with him and went and sat in with Django. That was the thrill of his

life. They were really surprised. He really knocked 'em out ... the whole club went wild. How many people get to satisfy the thrill of a lifetime — get to meet their idol and play with them?

**AV:** Very few. What a great experience!

**RK:** Later in the war, he was shot down over Mindanao, but he made it back.

**AV:** What do you think of modern steel playing and the pedal steel?

**RK:** I think the pedal steel has great potential, but could be played to sound a little more natural. Joaquin Murphy, for example, has a real human touch. Some other pedal steel playing I've heard has a mechanical edge to it that you can't get away from. It's partly the nature of the instrument, but there are some players I hear who don't have what I call "soul" in their playing. It's harder to put expression into a pedal steel because of the mechanical make-up of changing chords with pedals. That is my opinion.

**AV:** How can steel players play more soulfully?

**RK:** A steel player should try to know the song they're playing so well they're able to put a little more of themselves into it. You can take two or three players, even on lap steel, with the same songs ... they'll sound like themselves and not anybody else. Andy Iona didn't play like Eddie Bush, and Eddie didn't play like Danny Stewart, and Danny didn't play like Dick McIntire. When you're playing a number that you know, you kind of project yourself into playing what you feel and hear ... what it is you're trying to say to the listener. You're trying to tell it in your own way.

**AV:** What do you think makes Hawaiian music unique?

**RK:** Jimmy Kahanalopua always told me "the steel guitar is the voice of Hawai'i .. an extension of the physical voice". That's what I was told and it's exactly the way I feel about it. An authentic Hawaiian singer will sound like a steel guitar. It's like an extension of a people's singing voice to the world, using an instrument to do so.

**AV:** Ralph, thanks for a great interview.

**RK:** You're welcome. It was great to talk with you kid.





# DISC `N DATA



Well, we did a PFA (Plucked From Air) on a more definitive title for this column, and came up with this "why didn't we think of it before?" cutie. May not be "da bes", but it sure opens the column up for ANYTHING having to do with recorded or in-print Hawaiian music and music books. Opinions? IMPORTANT: If you're sending "new record" data to us, be SURE you give name and address where YOU purchased tape or CD, in case someone — especially outside the U.S — needs to order by mail.

**Brand new Steel Guitar Discography** from HSGA member, **Joe Goldmark**. "The International Steel Guitar & Dobro Discography" is the first new edition since 1980. It has "a fairly extensive Hawaiian section" (inc. 3 full pages of J. Byrd, folks!) Joe says "I believe this is the only comprehensive Hawaiian steel guitar listing available." Nicely spiral bound, the 3/4" thick 5"x7" book has sturdy covers, and a cross-reference, "handy when you want to know who played in a certain band." No prices are given for the records, since Joe says they're basically the same as the 1980 edition. (Best to check your local music store, anyway, or - for older records - the reference section of your library, for address of a large music distributor who might still have copies.) Although we found the Hawaiian section still somewhat incomplete (Alan's tapes, for example), it ain't Joe's fault. Suggest HSGA members send their list of recordings to Joe, for the next edition of his book. Then everybody will feel "complete". You can get the new Discography for \$19.95 single copy, or ask for wholesale price, 5 or more copies. Contact: Joe Goldmark, 2259 14th Av., San Francisco, CA 94116; phone (415) 664-7653.

"Paradise Isle II" (tape or CD) and "Paradise Isle III" are **Duke Ching's latest recordings**, released this past spring. Each has full sides of Hawaiian favorites and familiars, many of them dance tempo. Besides himself on steel, Duke's "Hawaiian Serenaders" consist of Chief Panesi (Ben) Afualo on both acoustic & electric guitar, and Titus

Napoleon on string bass, on "Paradise Isle II". "Paradise III" has Titus Napoleon and Wally Wailaka Harpst on electric guitar. On both recordings, all three men do vocals. Great music for Hawaiian-style background at your holiday get-togethers. Contact: Duke Ching, 2637 Mirada St., Highland, CA 92346; phone - (714) 862-8355.

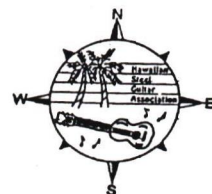
**Slack Key treasures** -For you who are true collectors of Hawaiian music, don't pass up the first two releases in Dancing Cat Records new series "Hawaiian Slack Key Masters. "**Punahale**", featuring **Ray Kane** embodies the essence of traditional Hawaiian music, in Ray's own *nahenahe* (sweet, soulful) guitar style and deeply expressive vocals. (#38001). "**Sonny Solo**" is da mos bes of **Sonny Chillingworth**, one of Hawai'i's most influential slack key guitarists of all time. Sonny's acoustic stylings are legendary and his marvelously rich, warm voice and rare, natural vibrato express for many, the essence of Hawaiian music and Hawaiian soul. This is the music of the *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboy). (#38005). (Sonny died on August 24, after a fight with cancer. His loss is deeply felt in Hawaiian music circles. He never relaxed his commitment to give 100% of himself, despite his pain.) Both recordings are available on cassette @ \$9.95 + \$1.00 postage (in U.S.), CD @ \$15.95 + \$1.50 postage (in U.S.). Outside U.S., check your post office. Available from: Harry's Music, 3457 Wai'ala'e Av., Honolulu, HI 96816; phone - (808) 735-2866.

**FLASH! the long-awaited 3rd recording in the "VINTAGE HAWAIIAN TREASURES" SERIES is HERE!** As we write this, Harry B. Soria Jr., KCCN "Territorial Airwaves" deejay, and master archivist of vintage Hawaiian music, is still writing the liner notes for the third album in the series with "many more volumes to follow". Albums I, II and III are "49th State" label, original 78RPMs, which were recorded and produced in Hawai'i, right after WWII, and have undergone extensive computer restoration and digital re-mastering to give

you undistorted "you are there" listening quality from an era long gone.

Album III, available in both cassette and CD, is being produced by Cord Intn'l ("Country Comfort" and others) and recorded by Hanaola Records. Album III should be available in stores, by the time you receive this Quarterly. All can be ordered at normal prices from Harry's Music. Of the music, on these first three recordings, Harry B. says it is "performed in the unique style that makes it unquestionably Hawaiian, and represents a primary vehicle of Hawai'i's cultural expression — beautiful and timeless." Yes, you'll hear Hawaiian steel guitar on all of the tunes. See if you can determine who's playing: Benny Rogers, Pua Almeida or Big Island steel artist Arthur Kaua.

**VOLUME I - "Hapa Haole Hawaiian Classics"** features Genoa Keawe and Johnny Almeida. Vocals are in English, in the very local "backyard ethnic" chalangalang style. (You know every one of the songs; the repertoire is too long to list here.) **VOLUME II - "Hula Hawaiian Style"** is all Hawaiian language and features Joe Keawe, John Almeida, John Pi'ilani Watkins. (Again, many familiar favorites, you're already playing, but "very Hawaiian" in styling.) **VOLUME III - "Mele Hula Hawaiian Style"** is a cross-section of vintage tunes, among them "Puamana", "Manuela Boy", "E Mama 'E". Emphasis is on singing, and not all are hulas. Volume IV is being readied, as we speak, and who knows what's next, except more wonderful "re-incarnations" of the remembered sounds of the Territory — the Golden Age of Hawaiian music. *Many thanks, Harry B. Soria, Jr. Your dad would be proud of you for making this collection possible.*





# MEMBERS' CORNER

From John Marsden, Sheffield, England- "I appreciated getting the magazine within a few days of publication, instead of having to wait up to three months for sea-mail delivery. I'm glad I requested airmail this year. On a more general note, I wish we could bury this term 'lap steel'. It seems to me both derogatory and inaccurate, and is better descriptive of the pedal steel, which has to be played seated, over the lap. Particularly models with knee (or lap!) levers. For stage work, most Hawaiians play standing, so to describe their guitars as 'lap' is plainly wrong. I invite you to compare the enclosed photo (news clipping) of Herby Wallace with the pictures on pages 8 & 9 of the (July/August) current newsletter, and decide to which term 'lap steel' most obviously applies! (Herby Wallace is pictured seated at his pedal steel, with keyboard over his lap; any evidence of 'lap' in the "Coconut Wire" photos of HSGA players is lost in their standing positions behind their 'ax's. However, many early acoustic steel guitars were truly legless, 'lap' instruments.)"

From Carlos Minor, Sesser, Ill.- "(Thanks) for the front page picture of the beautiful Rialto Theater in Joliet. I moved to Chicago in the early Forties, and there was a Rialto Theater there, on downtown State Street. Name performers performed there ... (Joliet Rialto) looks like the inside of the Rialto in Chicago. Did they move the building to Joliet?"

From Jean Dyck, Aldergrove, B.C. - "I enjoy all the articles in the newsletter very much. Jerry Byrd has been my idol for many years, and reading about him in the newsletters makes me feel in touch with him."

From Ivan Sinclair, Belleville, Ontario - "Hawaiian music is not heard in this area, and to my knowledge, I am a loner playing steel guitar (Hawaiian). I have not played steel guitar in public for 30 years due to nervousness. However, I was asked to play for a special music service in our church. I bit the bullet, or should I say the steel bar, and played, May 15. One thing that surprised me is

that after the service, I had people tell me it was the first time they had *seen* anyone play steel guitar as I had. Guess I must have had the "Hawaiian flavor" in the hymns I played. Now that I have broken my silence, will I continue (to play steel)? You bet! How else can I help promote Hawaiian music and steel guitar in my area." (Note from Alan Akaka: Thanks for sharing your experience and for exposing the Hawaiian steel guitar to the parishoners at the church service. It's very Hawaiian to share a part of you with others. Keep up the good work!)

From Tom Harrington, Tasmania, Australia - "As a point of interest, it takes the mail twelve weeks to arrive here from Honolulu, but the wait is worth it as I get a great amount of pleasure from the magazine and music. We are told that Tasmania, the beautiful island state of Australia, is drifting towards Hawai'i at the rate of 25 MM per year, so one day we should anchor off Maui, adding to the fleet of islands Mark Twain wrote about. Perhaps we are following Captain Cook's route!" (We follow your "drift", Tom and will stay alert!)

From Cora Gisser, Los Angeles, CA - "I am looking for steel guitar music for A Major tuning. I take lessons, and at each lesson there is another "O'ahu Method" lesson, but I would like to find some additional music...none in the music stores in Los Angeles (except the Mel Bay books, but they're for a different tuning). I've already discovered a possible source in the "Buy and Sell" column of the Quarterly - my first issue." (Cora is a brand new HSGA member, thanks to Al Busco of "Steel Guitar Club of Canada". Mahalo nui loa, Al. NOTE: If there an HSGA member out there who can help Cora? Her address is 4285 Brunswick Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039. For A Major sheet music (or any other) try Harry's Music, 3457 Wai'ala'e Ave., Honolulu, HI 96816, Att'n Alan Yoshioka or Gary Chung. If they don't have what you want, they may be able to direct you to a source.)

From George "Keoki" Wiebenger,

Maple Ridge, Canada - "I had the pleasure of the company of Vic and Nancy Rittenband for a few days, as they performed at the Steel Guitar Festival, which I organize and host, each June. We also laid on a show at the local Seniors Club, called "Centennial Center". Both days went very well with about 14 players of various styles. I dedicated the festival to the memory of former HSGA member and close friend, Harold Schmidt, who passed away in early June. My alohas to all at HSGA headquarters." (Thanks, "Keoki" for all you do, for Hawaiian music and steel guitar. See Vic's article on the Festival in this issue.)

From Ivan Reddington, Lakeland, FL - "Folks might be interested in knowing about 'Fat Rick's Guitar Emporium', 68 Kenway Rd., London SW5 ORA, England. (Phone: 071 370 7835). He has several old lap steels, mostly 6-string, but usually in very good condition. Also, recently, I found a 6-string Del Vecchio steel in Lelmar Music, Ave. Reboucas 3060, Sao Paulo, Brazil. (Phone 011 814 9588). This is the only steel I have found in South America. We hope to come to Convention in Hawai'i, if I can get a proper vacation."

From Arnold Jones, Lumby, B.C. Canada - "I get great enjoyment from the HSGA Quarterly, and read every word. I especially enjoy stories of the old time players and how they are doing. I went to see every Hawaiian Band I could, when they travelled through the prairies in the 1930s. I'm collecting the sheets of music as they come in the Quarterly, although I haven't had time to practice all the different tunings. I'm still using mostly A tunings. ... I intend to get more tapes of the old players, now that I have addresses to send for them. One day, I hope to make the trip to Hawai'i, and hopefully stay long enough to get around to all the places where Hawaiian music is played." ('E, Arnold, come to HSGA convention in Honolulu, next spring! Good discounts at the hotel, and lots of Hawaiian-style steel music. In fact, bring your 'ax' and PLAY with us. Lorene Ruymar can give you a good run-down on what goes on. Call or write



Lorene: (604) 263-8944 at 2090 West 44 Av., Vancouver, B.C., V6M 2E9.)

From Leo Duffy, Studio City, CA. - "I travel to O'ahu twice a year and listen to KCCN, KINE and KTRH...Harry B. is my favorite DJ. He mixes up all hapa haole and steel and those old boys who played the music the tourist likes to hear. I am an outsider who cares for the spirit of aloha. I can say in all truth that in 25 years visiting Hawai'i, nobody (local) was rude. Let's not turn the town into a Disneyland." (Note from Alan Akaka: Welcome to HSGA, Leo. Come to Convention next May, and we'll give you a whole week of good old tunes and steel guitar!)

From Jeff Kelley, Huntington Beach, CA - "I was steered in your direction by Freddie Tavaras, with whom I had an acquaintance, prior to his passing. I was able to get my hands on a vintage Fender 3-neck Stringmaster (and) I bought Jerry Byrd's Big-Bertha-How-to-Book, and now I'm a novice ... after 9 years! Now that I've discovered HSGA, maybe I can find some players." (Absolutely. And lots of on-going Hawaiian events in Southern California, too. Welcome!)

From Monty McPhalen, Vancouver, BC - "My late husband, Frank McPhalen, who passed away March 26, 1993, was a member of HSGA since 1987. We enjoyed many conventions in Hawai'i, the quarterly magazines and other get-togethers, here in Vancouver. I now would like to carry on the same tradition, because of my love for Hawaiian music, and in honor of Frank. (From Alan Akaka - A warm Hawaiian "welcome home" hug, Monty. I'm most pleased to greet you as a "new" HSGA member, and hope to see you at all your favorite HSGA events.)

## HSGA 1994-95 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

available after October 1, 1994. Please send \$1.50 to cover First Class postage, as it's a BIG list!



Frank Della Penna proudly shows off a vintage National Tricone in Joliet. Frank played it beautifully, in the style of the old masters.

CONVENTION - Continued from pg. 5

spirit and feel like, "Hey, we really do have something special to offer, as a club." (Ed. Note - more on this in Alan Akaka's "Ax Handles" column.). Mike Scott and some others started really perking with good ideas and enthusiasm for a membership drive, and you'll be hearing more about this in the next Quarterly.

One point from Mike made good sense AND "cents": "If YOUR friend were to pay HSGA the \$24 annual dues, even if s/he might not be as dedicated to steel guitar as we HSGA nuts are, s/he could save that amount in the first night's HSGA Convention rates at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel in Honolulu in May, and be ahead that \$24 on every subsequent night of stay." Think about it, folks. It would be hard to find a more economical, "bustin' with fun" way to stay in Waikiki and enjoy Paradise than our HSGA Hawaiian Convention.

Well, Art and I are home now, and Art is downstairs, already working on his program for next May in Hawai'i! The bug bites hard. And I'm sending that lil' "bugger" off to bite on all of YOU. As it's said in Hawaiian "E komo mai!"

come to our HSGA "family gathering" in Honolulu next spring!

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**Tape #1/** Duke Ching, Mike Beeks, Art Ruymar, Jess Bishop

**Tape #2/** Doug Hazelberg, Ron Simpson and Jam Session w/Neal Cosand, Ian Ufton, Rex Rieke

**Tape #3/** Mae Lang, Doug Smith, Pat Brunnemer, Sig Vogel

**Tape #4/** Owana Salazar, "Coral Sea Islanders", Doris Atkinson

**Tape #5/** Mike Scott, Lorene Ruymar, Maurie Junod, Al Weatherhead

**Tape #6/** Neal Cosand-Rex Rieke "jam"; Bob & Julie Waters; Dick Lloyd

**Tape #7/** Frank Della-Penna, Duke Ching, Owana Salazar

**Tape #8/** Rex Rieke, Warren Slavin, Frank Niespodzany, Don Woods

**Tape #9/** Neal Cosand, Phil Bender, Greg Wong, Ian Ufton

**Tape #10/** Jack Moore, Ray Gaitsch, Leonard T. Zinn, Frank & Donna Miller

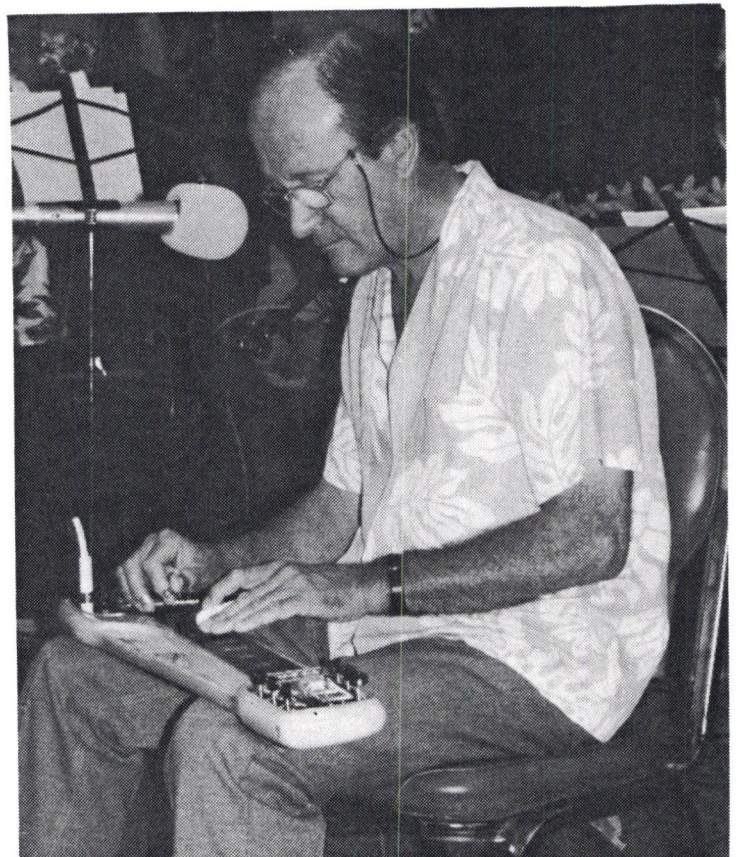
**Tape #11/** Pre-Lu'au: Frank & Donnal Miller, Phil Bender, Doug Smith

**Tape #12/** "Lu'au"





**NOTHING "UNDERGROUND" ABOUT HSGA'S STEEL PLAYERS!**  
*Top Row: Maurice Junod and Mae Lang; Bottom Row: Doug Hazelberg and Ian Ufton. Want more?  
View some more Joliet music and fun in the Winter Quarterly, and COME TO HONOLULU IN MAY!*





# STEEL GUITAR "UNDERGROUND"

by Jerry Byrd

Underground?? Steel guitar?? Yes - I think so.

I've been playing steel guitar for 55 years. It was an "underground" instrument when I first heard it, and it still is. To those few who did know, it was called "Hawaiian" guitar.

But, how so "underground"??

Because: if you were to stop 50 people on the street and ask them if they knew what a steel guitar was, I'll bet you that 40 of them wouldn't know. Nor could they describe what it sounds like — or name you one player of same! Why??

Even after 100 years in existence, and having been heard all over the world, people still come up to me (and you, too, I'm sure) and ask "What *is* that instrument? It's beautiful!" etc. etc. And even after I explain to them what it is, what it was, and where it originated, I'll see a faint glimmer of recognition cross their face — maybe.

I believe there are several reasons for this. See if you agree.

**1. Steel guitar does not have any established appearance** — a non-entity, sort of. It doesn't look like a guitar anymore, and it comes in dozens of forms. It *was* a guitar, and was laid on the lap and played, and everybody did it that way. A few hung it around their neck so they could stroll and play — but it *was* a guitar. Now it's called "lap steel" — or worse yet, "slide" guitar - *ugh!*

**2. Steel guitar is versatile.** There are endless ways of playing a steel guitar, more than any other instrument in existence, I believe. So, if you play a certain kind of song - say a Latin or Spanish melody, it can sound Spanish, or Hawaiian, or country, or whatever, depending on *how* it's played. And, with the myriad of electronic gadgets now available, all kinds of stuff can be added, each one changing the identity of the basic instrument.

**3. Steel guitar music: Maybe the most important component.** With the terrific advancement in technology, especially as it applies to pedal guitars, the music played on steel guitar has also changed radically. Nothing is impossible to the extent that it's almost a detriment. Too much is not always the best.

And yet, with all that's available to today's steel guitarist, it is still "underground" as far as the music would be concerned.

I realized this state of affairs many years ago, and I knew that if I had any hopes of "selling" steel guitar and recordings thereof, I would have to play music that appealed to the majority: songs they knew. Having loved Hawaiian music my whole life, I always included one or two Hawaiian songs (if not the whole album) in every session I did. But I knew that I'd have to do other music too, if I were to have any real success.

It was my plan to put steel guitar in as many musical settings as I could: Hawaiian, of course; Country; Blues; popular standards; even a symphonic Suite. Also foreign music: Japanese; German; Spanish and others. I wanted to show that our instrument could be played in *any* kind of music that the player wanted to play. And it worked, to some extent.



"Little Grass Shack" got the jazziest steel guitar jam treatment ever at Aloha Festival concert, Ala Moana Center "Centerstage". (L to R) Alan Akaka, Greg Sardinha, Bobby Ingano, Casey Olsen on steel; Hiram Olsen (guitar), and Casey's great uncle Buddy Hew Len (bass guitar).

There were others too. Yet all of us together couldn't put steel guitar "over the hump." We are still "underground". For instance, when was the last *hit* recording of a steel guitar selection? I think we will almost all agree that music is pretty much out of style nowadays - right? Elvis and the Beatles set music back about 75 years. But I'll say this: sooner or later one has to play music!

Music is an art form. An art form, whatever it is, must express the feelings and the emotions of the artist. In music that means a melody with feeling. That's all. That's it. And until you do that, and unless you do that, you are only making sounds — not music that is felt deep in your innermost being, and is transferred to that instrument and through it, to your listener.

When you play like this, you will have given your listener a feeling and an emotional experience that they will always remember, *and the instrument* that made that made that beautiful sound will stay in their "mind's ear" the rest of their lives.

Well, so be it. "Underground" or not, we know, don't we?? So, what do we do?? KEEP PLAYING! With *aloha*.

(Ed Note: Last August, Jerry was honored as a "Musical Treasure of Hawai'i" by KCCN Radio. Jerry's comment "I'm a little tarnished and definitely varnished." Lucky for us that Jerry Byrd, at least, is NOT "underground"!, and we think VERY "polished".)







# HAOLE HULA -2-

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5 9 6	7 7 -		10
D7	G	G	G C#7

12 - 14 - 15 - - -      R 15 15 14 13      12 15 -

12			12 15 -
	15	14	13
11			13
D7	G	G G7	C Eb7

14 - 13 12 -      9 8 7 - 7 7 8 9 10 11 12 -

14 14			
14 14	13	12	8 9
	13	12	8 9
E7	Bb7	A7	A7 D7

11 12 - 6 7 -      R 10 9 8 7 -      5 6 7 - -

11 12 - 6	7 -	10 9 8	7 10 9 8
11 12 6	7	10 9 8	7 10 9 8
			7 10 9 8
11 12 6	7		7 5 6 7
D7	G	A7	D7 G







# "AX" HANDLES

By Alan L. Akaka

Well, folks, your Editor got "pushy" with me again, so I am allowing her to publish excerpts from my tape-recorded greeting to HSGA members attending the Joliet convention, in August. Actually, this is a message to ALL of you, because it includes every one of HSGA's 500-plus members. I'd love to have been in Joliet, in person, but August finds me winding up Kamehameha Schools' "Summer Music Camp" program, and beginning Fall Semester school registration for the Warriors' Band. (*Gee, maybe I can get a steel player into the marching band ...hmmmm.*)

## Excerpts from President Akaka's "Welcome" to HSGA members, in Joliet

"Interest in playing steel guitar is catching on among the younger musicians, in Hawai'i. (*At the Ho'olaule'a*) seven of our ten professional steel guitar entertainers (including me) were in their 20s and 30s, and it's HSGA members who are making the difference. As a matter of fact, I just learned that a talented young Hawaiian musician who performs on 'ukulele and slack key guitar was in the audience at the Ho'olaule'a. He came with a friend, and got so excited about steel guitar, that he's got one on order, and will soon be taking lessons from Barney Isaacs. How 'bout that! (*Barney's new recording is great, with a lot of hapa haole Territorial-style songs you may want to adapt for your own "book".*)

"Another local man, whom I advised on the phone about a missing part for an old electric National, doesn't play steel himself, but he's going to join HSGA out of his love for Hawaiian music; he feels HSGA has already shown him some real aloha spirit. You see folks, you never know where HSGA's new members are going to come from. I bet there are a few prospective HSGA members in every audience you play for. People who just like to listen to Hawaiian music, and stay in touch with the



people who do play Hawaiian steel. Encourage them to join. Send me their names, or their business cards. Marjorie and I will do the rest. (*Some of you are already referring people to me, and sending in names of people who might be interested in joining HSGA. My personal mahalo for your commitment.*)

"I get and answer letters from members and prospective members from all over the world. Whatever you're doing to encourage others to join in the fun and friendship of making Hawaiian music together, keep it up! It's working! Give Hawaiian music as gifts; play Hawaiian music for guests to your home. And, most important, let your local newspaper know when and where you're playing a gig or a casual, so it can be listed in their event calendar. My personal



Duke Ching plays his "7 acres of strings", so-titled by Merle Kekuku. Bob and Julie Waters back him up in their turquoise HSGA T-shirts, designed by Duke.

goal for HSGA's membership, next year at this time, is another 150-200 new members.

"Take HSGA membership applications (*which we will send you, if you'll write*) with you when you play. You may be very surprised at the response. Oh, and put YOUR name at the very top, so I can say 'thank you' publicly, in the Quarterly for bringing in a new member. (*"Thank you" goes to Lorene Ruymar and Jerry Byrd on a continuing basis, for the new members who "just say YES" to joining, because Lorene and Jerry suggested it.*)

"Aloha! Have a great Hawaiian-style time, and I'll see you in Honolulu at convention next spring."



**COMING IN THE  
WINTER '95 ISSUE:  
A CLAY SAVAGE  
HSGA  
PICTURE ALBUM  
of Convention (and  
some  
UN-conventional!)**





**1995 HSGA HONOLULU  
CONVENTION  
RESERVATION FORMS &  
EVENT SCHEDULE**

for  
**"MAY DAY IS HSGA *PLAY DAY*  
IN HAWAI'I!"**

**April 30 through May 4, 1995**

**Hotel Reservation DEADLINES:**

**Feb. 15, in mail to Seaside Hotel MAUI**  
(post-convention week)

**March 1, in mail to Queen Kapiolani Hotel,**  
HONOLULU

**CONVENTION REGISTRATION DEADLINE:  
MARCH 1 (TO HSGA OFFICE)**

**WHY RESERVE SPACE *RIGHT NOW* ?**

• The week-long May Day festivities in Honolulu bring MANY visitors to Waikiki; hotel space goes *FAST*, and HSGA has its Convention Discount (close to \$30 per room per night) on *ONLY* 40 rooms (Discounted hotel rates apply to 1994-95 paid members only.)

• Same for Maui, the week *AFTER* convention  
• As for HSGA Convention Registration there's a *LIMIT* to how many 20 minute playing sessions we can fit in three days on stage, and we *DO* hold some times open for our exciting Hawaiian entertainment groups who just drop in to "perform and run" in the midst of *their* normal work day.

AND in order to produce a smooth running event, we need to know (1) how many steel players we can expect; (2) how many volunteers we'll have to sit-in on back-up, (3) how many are staying at the Queen Kapiolani and (4) how many are going on to the Maui Seaside.

***PLEASE KOKUA --REGISTER NOW!***  
Use the Forms on the following pages;  
be sure to keep copies for yourself.



## H.S.G.A. 1994 HONOLULU REGISTRATION

QUEEN KAPIOLANI HOTEL, 150 KAPAHULU AV., HONOLULU, HI 96815

MUST BE MAILED BEFORE MARCH 1 1995 to:

JANICE, CENTRAL RESERVATIONS, HAWAIIAN PACIFIC RESORTS

1150 SO. KING ST., HONOLULU HI 96814 • Toll Free 1-800-367-5004 (U.S. & CAN); 1-808-591-2335/Ext. 3014 (HAWAII) • FAX 808-533-0472

Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ # IN PARTY \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov./Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal code \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE/TIME (after 3 p.m.) \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTURE DATE (before 12 Noon) \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOMMODATION NEEDED: \*Write in choice: TW for "Twin Beds" or DBL for "Double Bed"**

STANDARD:	Price per Day	*Beds?	# Persons	Price per day	*Beds?
1/2 persons	\$56 + 10.17% tx.	_____	3 persons	\$71 + 10.17% tx	_____
<u>W/KITCHENETTES:</u>					
1/2 persons	\$70 + 10.17% tx	_____	3 persons	\$85 + 10.17% tx	_____

ONE DAY'S DEPOSIT ENCLOSED TO HOLD RESERVATION\*  Check/M.O. for \$\_\_\_\_\_ herewith.

\*HSGA's special rates are good from April 22 to May 8

CREDIT CARD  Visa  MC  Amex  Diner's Club /# \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRES \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_

-----CUT HERE AND MAIL HONOLULU FORM **ABOVE** TO HAWAIIAN PACIFIC RESORTS-----

MAIL MAUI FORM **BELOW** TO SAND & SEASIDE HOTELS

## H.S.G.A. 1994 MAUI REGISTRATION

MAUI SEASIDE HOTEL, 100 W. KA'AHUMANU AV., KAHULUI, HI 96732

MUST BE MAILED BEFORE FEBRUARY 15, 1995 to:

JEANIE, SAND & SEASIDE HOTELS • STE 714, 2222 KALAKAUA, HONOLULU, HI 96815

1-800-367-7000 (U.S. & CAN); • 1-800-451-6754 (Neighbor Islands) • FAX 808-533-0472

Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ # IN PARTY \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov./Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal code \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE/TIME (AFTER 3 PM) \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTURE DATE (BEFORE NOON) \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOMMODATION NEEDED:**

SUPERIOR (FOR 1 OR 2 PERSONS): (All rooms have refrigerators) \$60 per day, inc. tx.

With Budget rental car ('95 Auto/AC/compact) \$83 per day inc. tx.

FREE: pik up/drop off at airport; mileage. You pay gas. CAR NEEDED DATE \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

ONE DAY'S DEPOSIT ENCLOSED TO HOLD RESERVATION  Check/Money Order for \$\_\_\_\_\_ herewith.

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRES \_\_\_\_\_

Name which appears on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_



KEEP THIS PORTION BELOW FOR YOUR RECORDS

## HAWAIIAN MUSIC & HSGA CONVENTION ACTIVITIES, APRIL 30 THRU MAY ???

- Thurs. Apr. 27** "Sounds of Aloha" radio show, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Shell Bar/Hilton Hawn Village
- Sunday Apr. 30** Convention Registration desk open, 10 am-1 pm Queen Kapiolani lobby.  
HAWAIIAN STEEL GUITAR HO'OLAULE'A, 6-9 p.m., Ala Wai G.C. Auditorium
- Monday May 1** **Lei Day** - ALL day, Kapiolani Park (NO amps/mics provided in HSGA Tent). If you can play back-up, and are willing to STAY, PLEASE volunteer! This is a *work* day for our local folks, so you're *needed*. NO other Kapiolani Park performance is scheduled for HSGA, as Bandstand is already booked; (HSGA is wait-listed for May 6).
- MAY 2, 3, 4** **MUSIC SESSIONS, AKALA ROOM, QUEEN KAPIOLANI HOTEL.**  
Check with Lorene Ruymar at Convention Desk for schedule.
- Thurs. May 4** Go hear your "Pres" at Halekulani "House without a Key", 5:00 - 8:30 pm
- Friday May 5** OPEN DAY - to shop, sun, sleep it off!
- Saturday May 6** To be scheduled or FREE day to enjoy May Day Week festivities or take that tour you never got to do, LAST convention
- SUNDAY MAY 7** MAUI NO KA OE! We'll probably schedule something special for Mother's Day, for those going to Maui with HSGA. You CAN get HSGA's special "Maui Seaside" rates starting 5/5/94.

-----CUT HERE AND MAIL FORM BELOW TO HSGA, HONOLULU-----

### 1994 HONOLULU CONVENTION REGISTRATION MAY 2 THROUGH MAY 4, 1995 • QUEEN KAPIOLANI HOTEL

**MUST mail BEFORE MARCH 1, 1995 to HSGA, Box 11373, Honolulu, HI 96828.** (If you wish a Receipt, please enclose a Stamped, Self-Addressed Envelope with this Completed Form & your Fee.

FIRST & LAST NAMES OF ATTENDEES \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE/PROV/COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: **Advance Registration\*** of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$65 PER PERSON).  I will pay **LATE (\$75)** fee on arrival.

\*CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY. REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES LUNCH IN "AKALA ROOM", MAY 2,3,4, AND IS PART OF "AKALA ROOM" RENTAL PACKAGE WHICH HSGA BUYS. VOUCHERS FOR 3 LUNCHESES WILL BE ISSUED TO YOU AT HSGA CONVENTION REGISTRATION DESK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 10AM-1 PM. There is NO fee reduction if you eat lunch elsewhere.

**PERFORMANCES:**  I plan to perform.  I will play back-up for others, on  Guitar,  'Ukulele,  Bass,  
 Other (state) \_\_\_\_\_  I need to play at following time and day \_\_\_\_\_

**Performers: plan 20 minutes on stage; bring 2 sets of chord charts for back-up players.**  
Amps and mics will be provided on stage, but NOT available from hotel for private jam sessions

**PLEASE answer following, so we know where to find you!**

I am registering at Queen Kapiolani Hotel  I am staying at following hotel/home \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (if other than Queen Kapiolani) \_\_\_\_\_ Are you coming to Maui?  Yes  No

On Maui, I'm staying at  Maui Seaside  Other \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_



## E KOMO MAI! Welcome! New Members

Alan Akaka and the Board of Directors wish you all a fine Hawaiian-style time with us. HSGA is growing and Growing and GROWING! A list of ALL paid 1994-95 HSGA members will be available by the time you receive this issue. If you want a copy, please send \$1.50 to cover first class postage (due to *weight — lots of pages!*).

LEIGH F. BELL, 255 Mayfair Dr., Aurora, IL 60504  
ADRIANNE "KAI" BRANDON, 10126 Kenlake Dr. Riverview FL 33569  
GLENN R. CAMPBELL, 34 Wellington St. #4, Freemans Bay, Auckland NZ  
RON COULTHARD, P.O. Box 329, St. Marys, ON CAN N4X 1B2  
MICHELE DiVELLA, Via Parma 3/A, Bolzano, Italy  
LEO J. DUFFY, 4137 Bellingham Av., Studio City, CA 91604  
SANDY FRASER, 103-9486 Cook St., Chilliwack B.C. CAN V2P 4J7  
KENT GHIRARD, 3027 Alapali Pl., Honolulu, HI 96815  
NOBUYASU IGARASHI, 730 Sheridan St., Honolulu, HI 96814  
"KIMO" KA 'AIKAMANA, 30 Ho'opalu Dr., Pukalani, Maui, HI 96768  
JEFF KELLEY, 6501 Redgrove Cr. Huntington Beach, CA 92647  
RUDY LU'UWAI, 5100 Makena Rd., Kihei, Maui, HI 96753  
MONTY (Mrs. Frank) McPHALEN, #209-1825 W. 8 Av, Vanc. BC CAN V6J 1V9  
GLORIA MURAWSKY, 2525 S. Shore Dr. #20B, Milwaukee, WI 53207  
DALE M. NIGHTWINE, 2201 N. 79th St., Kansas City, KS 66109  
KAROLINE PIPER, 617 No. 2nd St., Tacoma, WA 98403  
LOU PIRIKAHU, 265 South Rd., Hawera, New Zealand  
EARL RACKLEY, 549 Green Valley Rd., Watsonville, CA 95076  
GREG SARDINHA, 1605 Ulupi'i Pl. Kailua, HI 96734  
HENRY "HANK" SIMS, 50 Bower St., Ottawa, ON, CAN K1S DK3  
DAVID J. STEWART, 2624 N. Springfield, Chicago, IL 60647-1031  
STEVEN D. WELLS 781 Altman St., No. Huntingdon, PA 15642-8741  
ELIZABETH WOOD, 555 University Av., #207, Honolulu, HI 96826

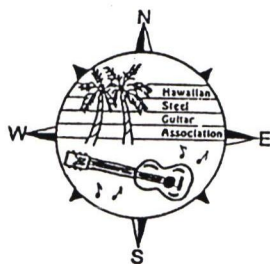
### THE LAST WORD Marjorie Scott, Editor

I've got an idea. (This is the place where Alan Akaka always says "Oh NO, not *another* one!") YES! It'll be fun for YOU. The January/February issue is always a little weak on news, because we have to print it in mid-December, when you're all busy with holidays. SO — LET'S HAVE A "PICTURE ALBUM" ISSUE. Send me a favorite photo from YOUR steel guitar album of memories; perhaps it's of you — current, or many years ago; maybe it's an old photo of a well-known artist or group, long gone. We love crazy party pictures, you and your kids or grandkids, pets, whatever. A mug shot will do (we got plenty steel guitars already). Be SURE to name who's in the photo, where and the year it was taken. If it was a special gig, say what and when. AND be sure *your* name and address are with the picture, so I can give you a credit line and know how to return the photo to you. How 'bout it? Let's have some photo pun together! Your photos need to be *received* in Honolulu by December 5, latest.

## HSGA QUARTERLY

The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association  
P.O. Box 11373, Honolulu, HI 96828-1373

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## FALL 1994

- HONOLULU CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORMS
- 1994-95 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- JOLIET CONVENTION REVIEW
- INTERVIEW WITH RALPH KOLSIANA