

A World of Accordions Museum

at Harrington ARTS Center

1401 Belknap Street
Superior, WI 54880
218-393-0245

World Accordion Day May 6, 2022

**An international promotion of the accordion
Commemorating the 1829 Patent Engendering Accordion Family
Instruments**



**Kevin Friedrich, Past President
Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes**

Dr. Willard A. Palmer Festival May 7, 2022

Eleventh Annual Celebration of Palmer's Genius



Dr. Willard A. Palmer

Social Music Celebration May 8, 2022

**Music enjoyed in the company of others strengthens
spirits and emotions in deeply shared ways**

May 6, 2022

9:00AM

A World of Accordions doors open

10:00-10:30 Helmi Harrington, Founder and President of AWA and HARTS, welcomes the audience, introduces Roger and Joy Schmitz (live-stream recording), Artistic Director Stas Venglevski, Professional co-workers (Chad and Ariel Walker, Col. Krzysztof Kopek, Cheryl Johnson, Zane Bail), See back page for current and past AWA Board Members.



Kevin Friedrich, leading spokesperson and Ambassador for the CIA, two-term past president, curator of his accordion museum in Dargaville, NZ, recipient of dozens of international honors, webmaster and First Vice President of AWAM. His gifts to the museum are of singular importance.

Kevin explains the *Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA)* May 6 celebration as the true anniversary of the 1829 date on which Cyril Demian (Vienna, Austria) registered the first accordion patent. This patent laid the groundwork for evolution of accordion-family-instruments that inspired worldwide innovations in bellowed free-reed construction.

The CIA was founded in Paris in 1935, it is now the world's leading accordion organization that sponsors many aspects affecting performers and composers, including the *Coupe Mondiale International Competition*. It recognizes the instruments' artists and influential spokespersons, among which Helmi Harrington is listed as "Honored Friend." Coordinated by Grayson Masefield, the annual event has grown to include international webcasts highlighting an incredible and diverse array of accordion activities from around the world.

This year Kevin and I are honored to present a selection of rare and beautiful antique accordion types as donated to AWAM by Alain Papineau in 2021.

Early Hybrids and Rarities (1830s-90s)

Conventional Diatonics as predicted in Flutinas

Piano Accordions in buttons

Various concertina types (Uhlig, Chromatic Bandonions)

Favorites: "Dancing Gypsy," Dual Treble

Elaborately ornate celluloid skins, inlays, abalone segments

One-row diatonic

Rarities: Japan, Russia, Fidel Socin

11:00

Mayor Jim Paine presents proclamations

12:00 Lunch

**1:00-2:30 Joanna Darrow (NJ) presents her display items honoring Stan Darrow: American Historian
“What’s Important about Preserving Accordion History?”**

2:45-3:45 Dee Langley (Minneapolis, MN): Workshop in Eastern and Balkan Music



4:00-4:45 Jazzlynne Skye (Superior, WI): An Eclectic Hodgepodge of Music People Like to Hear

An amazingly gifted musician, Jazzlynne plays four types of accordions with high-standard artistry. Her remarkable aptitude was demonstrated even as a nine-year-old in winning “Junior National Championship” in AAA competition. In subsequent years she fulfilled her potential by playing for thousands of people and large audiences. Jazzlynne has performed representing Helmi’s studios on many occasions, always to great credit!

5:00-5:45 Kevin Friedrich (NY and NZ) Meet the Accordion Family
(assisted by Jane Christison)
Flutina: (early 6-key)
Dual-treble keyboard
Luttbeg
Button Chromatics
Automaton
Cello, accordion
Et al.

6:00 Supper at Elks Lodge: Headliner entertainer: Dr. William Popp, Retired (Accordionist for *United States Air Force Strings*)

This long-anticipated entertainer has finally agreed to play for us. He has recently released CDs of his own compositions and arrangements. Be sure to attend his 4:00 workshop tomorrow **“An Interactive Discussion of My Accordion Compositions.”**

May 7, 2022

**Dr. Willard A. Palmer Festival
Annual Celebration of Palmer's Genius**

One hundred years after his birth (Jan. 31, 1917), Willard Palmer remains recognized as a leader in pedagogy and performance practice through nearly 800 published books for keyboard instruments. His methodology and meticulous scholarship have been lauded by teachers, artists, and students worldwide. This year also celebrates the eleventh anniversary of the receipt of Palmer's estate into *A World of Accordions Museum*. His massive output fills our third-floor library and is in use every day. We honor here the genius that offers every keyboardist, and especially accordionists, a progressive, thorough, and delightful musical education from the very beginning to virtuoso level.



AWAM is especially grateful to Willard A. Palmer, III, son of our honoree. Bill's generous donations from his father's estate are major assets of our resource libraries and concert hall. Here should be mentioned the conspicuously beautiful harpsichord, the Palmer display cabinet, our rare-books and our third-floor Palmer reference area. His life story is filled with moments he can describe as son of a super-distinguished father.

Palmer Festival Guest Performers

10:00-10:45 Michael Middleton (Belton, TX)



This respected nuclear-medicine physician and board member of *Scott and White Hospital* (Texas) enjoys a secondary specialty as a semiprofessional accordionist. His love of making music began during teen years and led to virtuoso awards and the formation of his band "The Middletones." His performances involve his MIDI-enhanced arrangements from all genres, especially Texas folk music. An active donor, board member and life member of *AWAM*, Mike has performed in our previous programs using his several accordions and his tuba. His concert this year will focus on influences from Dick Contino through repertoire and performance bravado.

11:00-11:45 John Scaffeo (Thunder Bay, Ont.)



As a repeat artist on our stage, John delights in surprising audiences through his uncommon range of musical styles, improvisation techniques, and superb arrangements. In 2002, he was the only Canadian entered into the *North American Accordion Association Contest* at which he was awarded first place. John also finished in the top three in an all-Canada *Roland V Accordion Competition*. John has accumulated credits that many others envy despite the loss of all but one finger-joint in his left hand. I never

asked what had happened to that hand because when he plays there is nothing absent in the sound and nothing wrong with the hand! He is an incredible musician!

12:00 Lunch

1:00-1:45 Mike Middleton and the Middletones Concert (Lance Middleton and Clayton Capps)

2:00-2:45 Dreams Fulfilled Through Music: The Archuletta Method for Teaching Accordion to Special Needs People

**3:00-3:45 “Masked Accordions” Dee Langley Ensemble:
Spencer Chandler, Richard Chin, Frank DiCapo, Alex Hake,
Kathleen Herling, Gayle, Jentz, Regina Magnuson, George Rosar.**

**4:00-4:45 Dr. William Popp: “An Interactive Discussion of My Accordion Compositions”
A limited number of CDs and music to be distributed.**

**5:00-6:15 Accordion Concertina Music Studios and Friends
Accordion Orchestra: Tracey Gibbens, Conductor (Duluth, MN)**

All of us associated with *HARTS* and *AWAM* are particularly appreciative of Tracey's dedication in conducting *Accordion Concertina Music Bands*. His suggestions are uplifting, inspiring confidence and joy in making music together. A true altruist, Tracey has engaged in many activities supporting *AWAM*, notably building maintenance. He has spent many hours recording our 78s onto CD format to make their accessibility more permanent. We are grateful to Tracey's wife Kerry VanDusen who contributes her percussion skills in our events.



Accordion Concertina Music Studios Band and Orchestra (MN and WI)



Our performing groups range from ensemble-size to 36-piece orchestra, made up of students from both ACM studios as well as professional musicians brought together by the love of making music, expansive repertory experiences, and

the delights of using and appreciating combinations of museum accordions of all species, manufacturers, and ages. We are grateful to conductor Tracey Gibbens for his encouragement and upbeat style that makes every practice a pleasurable occasion.

Honoring Composers and Arrangers Focused on Accordion Works

Slavko Avsenik

<i>Dolomitenlied</i>	Marian Syrjamaki-Kuchta on <i>Colombo</i>
<i>Hirtenlied</i>	Marian and Helmi, alternating with band
Leise rauscht das Meer	
Trumpeter's Echo	Rob Dingmann, Helmi, Tracey
Steirische Polka	
Autobahn	

German School

Hugo Herrmann	Tiroler Dorfmusik
Rudolf Wuerthner	Morning in the Mountains

American

Leroy Anderson/Al Terzo	Forgotten Dreams
Leroy Anderson/Al Terzo	Horse and Buggy
Willard Palmer	Ombo

6:30 Supper at the Elks Lodge

Open-mic entertainment
Closing ceremonies -- Champagne Toast

May 8

Social Music Celebration

10:00

The Norsk Høstfest Polka Service Band

This demand-performance is again sponsored by Yvonne Marts (Fergus Falls). First offered in 2021, this program became an immediate success and drew hundreds into our audience.



The Hostfest members are L-R: Jeanine Engen (MN), Helen Lunos (MN), Leanne Johnson (MN), Jerry Martin (ND), Walt Storey (MN), Karen Rath (ND).

This is only the second time our May Festivals include a “Polka Service,” also known as a “Polka Mass.” It is a musical event of great popularity in

many parts of the USA. Celebrated at Florian Chmielewski’s annual *Ironworld USA Polkafest* events, audiences numbering in the thousands sang familiar texts to polka tunes. We have been asked for this event many times, and this year offer it performed by the *Norsk Høstfest Polka Service Band*, a subgroup of the *Norsk Høstfest Accordion Club* of Minot, North Dakota.

11:00

Mike Middleton Polka Service Jam Session (open to all)

Dr. Mike was voted “Most Popular Accordionist in the USA” by “Stars Magazine.” His appeal is universal both in repertoire and in presentation. In his home state of Texas he often offers “Polka Masses” at various opportunities, always to enthusiastic responses. This year an assortment of additional players will join in for the “jam” session here.

12:00

Lunch

1:00

Dr. Craig Funderburg: Developing an Applied Accordion Department at the University of Alabama

2:00

Guided Tour through *HARTS* and the *AWA* Museum

(Second Floor) Books and Recordings Libraries, Music Files Room, American Accordionists Association Archival Collection Room, Faithe Deffner Legacy and George Curletto Area, (First Floor) A World of Accordions Museum displays, Small Items Repair Area, Heavy Machinery Room, Gift Shop/Sales Rooms.

About the Composers Represented

Our ensemble and band music focuses on composers whose principal renown rests in their love of music for accordion. The Slovene Oberkrainer Avsenik Ensemble, (1953-1990), including the brothers Slavko *Avsenik* and Vilko *Avsenik*, have earned a high place for their compositions which often sound as amenable folk styles but also rise to Art Music levels requiring surprising technical skills and subtleties. Like the great *Hohner* ensembles, this music is played by button chromatic and piano accordions together with diatonic types (Slovenian, Steirische).

Hugo Herrmann is credited as being the first composer to write abstract music for the accordion. His *Sieben Neue Spielmusiken* (1929, Germany) signaled the beginning of polyphonic composition, not relying on Stradella bass-chord patterns to form the harmonic structure. The commission for this work came to Herrmann through Paul Hindemith and contributed to his selection as director of the Trossingen Music School that produced many great performers and composers like Hans Brehme and Rudolf Wuerthner. Their compositions represent a high-point in mid-twentieth century German accordion music.

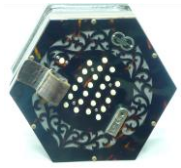
Al Terso has edited hundreds of pieces for accordion and accordion orchestras, many of which are now available in our library thanks to his generosity. We are proud to play two here and to recognize Terso's skills in adapting popular entertainment music for our instrument. Segments of his recorded works will be heard during the intermissions between scheduled events in our concerts.

The selected segments of George Curletto's music present but samples of overwhelming complexity and foresightful composition. As a great but often overlooked inventor, his instrument construction bridges from acoustic accordions to electronically enhanced instruments and then to virtual accordions—decades before his time! His ideas will prove to predict the future of accordions. We are honored to hold a major portion of his musical estate and expect to supplement it further over time.

About Museum Instruments Used

Lachenal English Concertina, (London, mid-1860s)

English concertinas, offering all chromatic pitches in up to four octaves, are organized so that scalar pitches alternate between the hands. Although multiple tones can be sounded together, common usage is for melody only. These concertinas are made in various pitch ranges for performance in consort. This rare antique was received from Lorna Andersson and was recently restored.



Romantic (1840s-80s)

This descriptive is often used for early accordion-family instruments with a piano-type keyboard related in design to the Flutina and harmonium. When placed horizontally on a special stand it is played as a keyboard reed organ and called *Organ Accordeon*; when held on the lap and played in accordion position it is called *Harmonieflute* by its manufacturing company *Busson*. The instrument has no bass section and only reservoir bellows that offer minimal dynamic range.



“Brevetto Grosio, “Accordinette,” (affectionately called “Flutterbox”) (Italy, 1950s)

Visually, this accordion is unlike any other in the Museum and remains a favorite. Its bellows are divided at midpoint in order to provide constant air to single-tongue reeds through left hand manipulation at the handle. Its shift allows uniform air flow, or alternatively engages a weighted pallet that produces a fluttering sound. This artificial tremolo accounts for its familiar name—“Flutterbox.” Like some other sound-effects instruments, it has keys only for the right hand. Found in Canada and donated by Jeff and Carrie Millikan.



Hohner Melodica

This close relative of 1830s keyed harmonicas is a more modern version offering octaves of pitches controlled by a piano keyboard.



Titano “Tiger” Piano Accordion, (Italy/New York, 1962-75):

Built to have popular appeal in the “Rock-n-Roll” scene but suitable for other music as well, the “Tiger” models attract attention through their Mazda (car) colors popular at the time. Featuring reversely colored piano keys, swept-back keyboard, and treble shifts containing quint reed banks, the body construction combines metal and wood structures resulting in a lightweight instrument ideal for the standing performer. Probably influenced by 1930s *General Accordion Co.*, this remarkable construct is said to have been designed by Faithe Deffner and Dr. Willard Palmer. Our performance uses the original prototype *Tiger*, donated to the museum by Bill Palmer III, together with later colorful models.



Frontalini “Cello Accordion,” (Italy, 1950s):

This instrument has unique sound characteristics attributed to the overtones of its reed-tongues. Despite its unusually large body size (26”), it is lightweight and spectacularly resonant. Like most accordions in the bass-accordion group, it has keys only for the right hand. There are no shifts that change pitch range. It adds textural variety when played in ensemble and offers highly expressive melodic lines. Tremolo is easily added and controlled by wavers of the left hand. Donated by John Simkus.



Hohner "Basso" (Germany, 1940s):

This bulky accordion was designed to give great depth and volume to the bass-line when used in orchestras. Its fine full-length reeds respond uniformly in playing expressive solo lines as well. It has keys only for the right hand while the left hand can employ a hidden air-button to simplify bellows manipulation. Acquired through Stanley Darrow.

**Excelsior "Jazz Model" (1960s):**

Preferred for their "dry" non-beating tuning and outfitted with double-low reed banks, this type was preferred by many jazz virtuosos. This instrument offers sonorously mellow tones that meld easily in orchestral sections.

Titano "Emperor" (USA/Italy, 1960s):

Encouraged by the Ernest Deffner company, Dr. Willard Palmer contributed to the development of the quint free-bass converter system that revolutionized repertory options by offering five octaves of single-pitches along with Stradella basses. The Palmer-Hughes duet team popularized the instrument through their performance excellence, lending their names to several models in *Titano* production. The "Emperor" model, of which this is an early example, offers two free-bass ranges and octave doublings.

**Excelsior Twenty-four-Bass (1930s):**

Received from the Prior estate in 2015, this little beauty has a unique tone quality that we can use for special moments. It is tiny, even a miniature compared to other twelve-bass accordions, but wonderfully powerful. This is the only example known.

**Silprio De Luxe (1930s):**

Also received from the Prior estate, this beautiful accordion was donated to the museum shortly before fires in California claimed the home and remainder of the estate. Its name is a shortening of the names Sylvia and Prior. The instrument was made by the *Excelsior* company with which the Priors were actively engaged.

**Six-key Flutina**

This tiny diatonic instrument is a very rare example of accordion construction after Cyril Demian's 1829 patent. It is the earliest example in the museum. Found and donated by Kevin Friedrich.

**Polverini Piano Accordion (Italy, 1999):**

Built with helicon basses and alpine tremolo, this accordion is acoustically modeled after its diatonic predecessors. It is particularly effective for Slovenian, Tyrolean, and Eastern-European folk music. It has three treble reeds (no shift), 48 bass buttons, and a highly polished veneer exterior.

**Pigini "Sirius" Button Chromatic (Italy, 1990s)**

This "C-system" instrument offers 89 treble keys and a chromatic converter in the bass section. It is an example of bayan construction influences in modern chromatic accordions such as others in use among the players.



Uniform Keyboard

The museum has more than one type of John Reuther's adaptation of Janko's 1882 keyboard design. Adjacent keys of the long rows are a whole-step apart, alternating with rows a half-step apart. This symmetry allows the player access to all key-specific pieces without relearning finger movements. Closely related to the piano accordion, some virtuosi used it enthusiastically. The instrument here is a rare variant favored by Frank Gaviani. It was found and donated to the museum by Kevin Friedrich.



Strasser Five-row Steirische Diatonic

This recent purchase for the museum plays in flat keys (F-Bb-Eb-Ab-Db) and is often used here to extend transposition options in our pieces. It has 58 treble keys and 19 helikon basses. Ten "horns," beautiful inlays and colorful bellows paper enhance its exquisite exterior.



Öllerer "Oberkrainer" (Germany, 1985)

In "like new" condition, the accordion was custom made for Pat Woods of Arlington, TX, and donated to AWAM by her in 2019. It is specially tuned for Alpine music of Avsenik tradition and contributes to the authenticity of our performances.



Polverini Slovenian Diatonic (Italy, 1995)

This four-row diatonic (G-C-F-Bb) was designed by Helmi with exceptional machinery and reed response. It offers 44 treble keys in Alpine tremolo and 15 helikon basses.



Hohner "Gola" (Germany, 1960s)

The Gola models are among the finest accordions ever built. This extraordinary model was owned and played by Christian DiMaccio, considered by many to be "the artist of the century." Its treble contains 112 keys in "C-system" order, five reed-banks, and 15 shifts. The bass section has 180+ basses in Stradella and free-bass pitches.



AWAM Board Members

The phenomenal growth of AWAM could not have been possible without help from many people including our Board Members, past and present:

Gary Harvell † (Duluth, MN)
Linda Griffith (Bovey, MN)
Audrey and Emil Meitzner † (Solon Springs, WI)
Faithe Deffner † (Long Island, NY)
Charles and Hanni Harrington (Austin, TX)
Carolyn Carver (Duluth, MN)
Sue Spencer (Duluth, MN)
Yvonne Marts (Fergus Falls, MN)
Willard A. Palmer, III (Spring, TX)
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Joanna Arnold-Darrow and Stanley Darrow † (Westmont, NJ)
Jane Christison (Kansas City, KA)
Stas Venglevski (Milwaukee, WI)

And our faithful volunteers who provide extraordinary services:

Tracey Gibbens and Kerry VanDusen (Duluth, MN)
Marian Syrjamaki-Kuchta (Duluth, MN)
Robin Floyd (Two Harbors, MN)
Anne Velasco (Duluth, MN)
Mary Carlson (Duluth, MN)
Al Zliman (Woodbury, MN)
Robert Dingmann (Golden Valley, MN)
Krys Kopec and Cherie Johnson (Duluth, MN)

Special donors for this event:

Charles Harrington
George Curletto

Between segments in these programs, recorded music will be provided thanks to Al Terzo (NJ) and George Curletto (Washington D.C.).