



EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

Since 1963



January / February 2016

Members Newsletter

Volume 11 Issue 1

Events Calendar

Wednesday March 9

Board meeting 5 p.m.
Prior to weekly banjo session
The Greenery, Walnut Creek
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Wednesday April 13

Board meeting, 5 p.m.
Prior to weekly banjo session
The Greenery, Walnut Creek
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Tuesday, May 31

Playout at Stoneman Village
390 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg
2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

www.eastbaybanjo.org

To book the East Bay Banjo Club to play at your event, please contact booking agent Bob Ehrhorn via email at boehrhorn@comcast.net or call (707) 731-0198.

President's Message

By Jack Starr

As many of you already know, the East Bay Banjo Club suffered the loss of two really great people. Not only were Harry Higgins and Georgette Twain great people, they were great banjo players, both of whom had been previously inducted into the 4-String Banjo Hall of Fame. Our thoughts and prayers go to the families of Georgette and Harry. You'll find a memorial article about them on page 2.

The East Bay Banjo club is very fortunate to have had such wonderful banjo musicians as members of the club. Their talents and club participation helped many of us become better banjo players and better people.



A big "Thank You" goes to the 15 club members who participated in the January 16th playout at the Masonic Hall in Oakland. You folks were a wonderful addition to the festivities of the evening and help keep us in the public eye.

To generate more interaction between the club members and heighten the enjoyment we get from playing banjo at gigs and during our practices, our Music Director Betty David will be issuing a gig playlist at least 2 weeks before an upcoming gig. That 2-week lead time will give us an opportunity to organize our music for the show, and to practice the tunes that will be presented. In order to bring more of us into the music "scene", before a gig, Betty will be asking club members a few questions, like, who wants to sing, who wants to start a tune, who wants to solo on a tune? Your active responses and involvement will then see the playlist reflect your input!!

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Inside:

Tributes to Harry Higgins, Georgette Twain – page 2
Alaska summer jazz cruise – page 7

Harry Higgins and Georgette Twain – In Memoriam

By John Greitzer

The East Bay Banjo Club lost two dear friends over the holiday season. Harry Higgins passed away in December at age 81 and Georgette Twain died in January at age 90. Our best wishes go to their families.

Harry Higgins

“Legendary” would be an understatement in describing Harry Higgins. From his 17 years leading the jazz band at the original Red Garter in San Francisco, and band leading at Kezar and Candlestick parks for the San Francisco 49ers and Giants, to his more recent years with the East Bay Banjo Club and playing at Peet’s Coffee in Walnut Creek, Harry left his mark on countless delighted audiences over the decades.

He reflected recently on how lucky he was to have been the bandleader at the Red Garter. “I just fell into it,” he said. “I was able to earn a living with it. I was really lucky.” Of course, it was his immense talent as much as luck that brought him that long stint as Red Garter bandleader.



Harry was elected in 2008 to the National Four-String Banjo Hall Of Fame. He was well-loved both by long-time EBBC members and by newer ones as well. Even some of our most recent members have stories about how Harry helped them with banjo-playing tips, showed them how to replace a banjo head, or talked about chord-melody theory with them. Harry and his wife Elinor (known as “Red” to EBBC members) were married for over 60 years. Their three children and eight grandchildren will help carry on Harry’s legacy, including granddaughter Danielle who is already a player and singer with our club.

Georgette Twain

The “Queen of the Banjo” and a lifetime member of the EBBC, Georgette Twain was a leading four-stringer since the early 1960s and continued touring the country until her recent illness. In recent years she performed with her daughter Cecilia, an accomplished violinist. Though Georgette moved to Nevada years ago, some of our long-time EBBC members still corresponded and visited with her up to the time of her death.

A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, she was a student and prodigy of Eddie Peabody, and became widely admired for her incredible technique and showmanship. Georgette was named to the Four-String Banjo Hall of Fame in 2007. Some EBBC members took lessons from Georgette, including club President Jack Starr, Music Director Betty David, and member Garry Kerr.

Georgette was known as a kind and gracious person who often sent cards or notes decorated with her artistic drawings. Her talent was matched by her modesty. Hospital staff who cared for her in recent years said she mentioned she played the banjo but gave no hint of her fame or stature with the instrument.



President's message, continued from page 1

So too at our weekly practices, Betty will be calling on us individually to select a tune to play and if you want to sing, solo or start that particular tune. Getting us more involved with the songs we play is not a new or novel thing.

Gig playlists are traditionally used by those who regularly perform, be they professional or amateur performers, so we are just getting "in tune" with the music performing scene. Likewise, when I first joined EBBC back in the dark ages, like in 1989, at practices club members were asked what tune they wanted to play and that is what we did. The music director did not call the songs, it was up to the club members and so we are just reviving that tradition. I hope this revival will be welcomed by our club members, but if it poses a problem, we can make necessary changes. As Georgette would have said,

"Banjorically yours,"

Jack Starr

Membership dues are due!

East Bay Banjo Club 2016 Membership Form

Dues are now payable in the amount of \$20.00 per member. Youth under 18 are free.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Birthday: _____

Please make \$20 checks payable to East Bay Banjo Club. Checks can be mailed to EBBC, P.O. Box 5414, Concord CA 04524, or given in person to Diane Malucelli, membership chairperson.

Playout for Live Oak Lodge crab-feed a big success

By John Greitzer

Photographs by Bob Nelson

The East Bay Banjo Club entertained a crowd of about 120 people on a rainy January 16 at the Oakland Masonic Lodge on Broadway in Oakland.

The two-hour playout for the Live Oak Lodge's annual crab-feed included many of EBBC's long-time favorites such as Beer Barrel Polka, California Here I Come, Margie, and Darkness On The Delta, among many others. The club closed the show with its traditional closer, "When The Saints Go Marching In." As band members exited the venue, attendees told us how much they enjoyed the music.

EBBC players were Garry Kerr, Phil Myers, Linda Myers, Tom Brunetti, Chris Lardge, Ardie Jarrett, Betty David, Karen Hefter, Kit Nelson, Sheila Welt, Don Granberg, Bob Ehrhorn, John Greitzer, Guy Black on bass and Terry Horner on gutbucket. Vocals were handled by Kit Nelson, Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Sheila Welt and Chris Lardge. Phil Myers and Karen Hefter took solos on a few songs. Bob Nelson took photos.



EBBC strums away



Sheila Welt sings



Terry Horner (l.) and Bob Ehrhorn join the fun



Kit Nelson sings, flanked by Karen Hefter and Betty David

More photos from the Live Oak Lodge playout

All photographs by Bob Nelson



Betty David plays while Kit Nelson sings



Guy Black lays down a bass line



Phil Myers takes a solo while Linda Myers mics his banjo



Tom Brunetti (l) and Chris Lardge strumming away

Board members and appointed officers for 2016

Board Members

President: Jack Starrjohn.starr@att.net
Vice President: Bob Malucellidmalucelli@att.net
Secretary: Ardie Jarrett.....jarjohn@msn.com
Treasurer: Sheila Welt.....weltbear@sbcglobal.net
Music Director: Betty David(925) 938-0126
Immediate Past President: Larry Risnerrhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net
Booking Agent: Bob Ehrhorn bobehrhorn@comcast.net

Non-Board Officers

Assistant Music Director: Jack Converyentline@msn.com
Assistant Music Director and Digital Librarian: Karen Hefter karenhefter@gmail.com
Assistant Music Director: Larry Risnerrhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net
Hospitality: Sheila Welt.....weltbear@sbcglobal.net
Librarian: Jim Blankenshipjpblankenship@att.net
Membership: Diane Malucellidmalucelli@att.net
Newsletter Editor/Publisher: John Greitzer johngreitzer@outlook.com
Telephone Tree: Diane Malucellidmalucelli@att.net
Uniforms (Gold Vest & Polos): Ardie Jarrett..... jarjohn@msn.com
Web Master: Bud Pearce bud.pearce@pearcechriss.com

Newsletter has new editor

After three years at the newsletter helm, Karen Hefter has turned over the editor's post to John Greitzer, who joined EBBC last year. John will try to match the high standards set by Karen and previous editors. He appreciates all the help provided by Karen and Webmaster Bud Pearce during the transition.

Upcoming birthdays

Happy birthday to all!



<p>Dick Neumann – March 1 Chris Lardge – March 3 Dina Melamed – March 14 Jim Blankenship – March 15 Richard Combs – March 20 Garry Kerr – March 20 Annie Lem – April 2 Bobbie Landers – April 17 Jim Abele – April 18</p>
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Advertisement

JazzSea is cruising to ALASKA! June 29 – July 5, 2016

JazzSea is offering a 7-day cruise on Holland America Line's "MS VOLENDAM" from Vancouver through the Inside Passage, to Juneau and Skagway, cruising Glacier Bay to Ketchikan, and return to Vancouver via the Inside Passage.

Featuring:

The Grand Dominion Jazz Band

The Bob Schulz Frisco Jazz Band

Prices start at **\$999** per person, double occupancy
(Category L, inside)

Motorcoach transfers available from Seattle to the ship in Vancouver, B.C.

Transfers available from Vancouver airport to the ship on June 29.

Hotels are available with transfers to the ship in both Seattle and Vancouver.

Early or Open dinner seating available.

For more information call Carol Neumann at 352.205.1777,

Email us at jazzsea@gmail.com or visit our website.

www.jazzsea.com

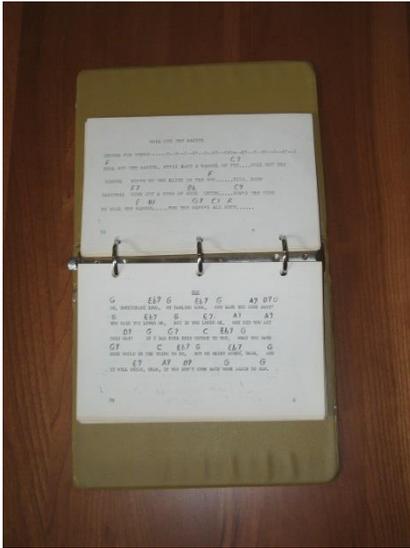
Jazzsea is also offering a Pre-Cruise Package from June 24-28 –
check the **Jazzsea** website for details.

EBBC songbook freshened up

By John Greitzer

Past President Larry Risner and Music Director Betty David recently completed revisions to the East Bay Banjo Club songbook, removing numerous songs and setting up a process for more easily bringing in new ones. The songbook had its beginnings in the formation of the club in 1963. The club's founders and early members

(including Larry) pulled together the songs they had been playing individually or with other bands. Little by little, a set of songs was created. In those days, the songs were simply index cards with the lyrics written on the card and the chord symbols written above the lyrics. Larry still has a set of those index cards, shown in the photo at left.



In the 1990s, club member Bill Cooper created sheet music for all the songs, and eventually his sheet music was digitized so club members now can use either a printed songbook or an electronic songbook.

Today the book contains over 200 “active” songs. Larry and Betty removed some songs from the active book, mainly ones the band doesn't play very often, or odd songs that don't fit the club's musical style.

Most of the songs date from the 1880s to the 1930s. A few songs from the 1950s to 1970s are in there too, such as “Ob La Di” and “And I Love Her” by the Beatles, “World Without Love” by Peter and Gordon, and “The City Of New Orleans” by Steve Goodman.

There still is room for new songs. EBBC has a Music Committee to bring in new songs. Any interested member can provide the Committee with sheet music for a new song. The Committee will evaluate it and have the club play the new song at one of our weekly sessions to determine if the song will work. If the results are positive, the song will be added.

By and large, though, the songbook still reflects American popular music of the turn of the 20th century and its first few decades. The songs reflect the times in which they were written, including, in a few cases, the racial and cultural prejudices of the day. The vast majority of the song lyrics simply harken back to a time when life seemed simpler and slower. Generally, the songbook provides a fascinating look at popular music and culture in the late 1800s and early 1900s.



**EAST BAY BANJO CLUB
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

December 8, 2015

El Tapatio Restaurant, 4633 Clayton Rd. Concord, CA

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: President – Larry Risner

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS & THANK YOU'S:

Welcome: Larry welcomed Sue Horn

Thanks You's: Larry gave Thank You's to each of his Board of Director members for all their hard work and dedications. He also thanked all the committee chairs.

Don Granberg: Don presented Betty David with a Thank You Gift.

Sheila Welt: Sheila presented a thank you to Larry Risner and Betty David. Gifts will be presented in January.

Sheila Welt: Sheila presented gift meal certificates to 16 members who had attended and played at half or more of the yearly gigs.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

President: Jack Starr

Vice President: Bob Malucelli

Secretary: Ardie Jarrett

Treasurer: Sheila Welt

Booking Agent: Bob Ehrhorn

Music Director: Betty David

ELECTION RESULTS: All officers were elected unanimously.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH was given by Jack Starr.

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

Digital Music Librarian: Larry explained the need for a knowledgeable person to keep and help members with their digital music on their electronic devices....IPads. Karen Hefter has agreed to accept this position.

Other Appointed Positions: To be announced in January, after the 2016 Board of Directors take office.

ADJOURNMENT: Since there wasn't any other business to come before this assembly, the meeting was adjourned until the December 2016 Annual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted
Ardie Jarrett, Secretary

East Bay Banjo Club Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: December 9, 2015

Place: Greenery Dining Room, Walnut Creek, CA

Board Members Present: Larry Risner, President; Bob Malucelli, Vice President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Sheila Welt, Treasurer & Past President; Betty David, Music Director; Bob Ehrhorn, Booking Agent.

Absent Board of Directors: None

Appointed Chairs Present: Diane Malucelli, Membership & Telephone Tree; Sheila Welt, Hospitality.

Absent Appointed Chairs: Jim Blankenship, Librarian; Bud Pearce, Web Master; Karen Hefter, Editor.

CALLED TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Larry Risner, President.

BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:

Secretary: Minutes were approved as presented, 6/0/0.

Treasurer: The Treasurer's report was accepted as presented and will be filed for audit.

Vice President: Bob Malucelli felt that the sound system appears to be O.K. and that players need to tone down so we can hear the melody and beat. Singers sounded good at last gig.

Music Director: Betty was happy to have been re-elected and thanked everyone for their continuous help & support.

Booking Agent: Bob Ehrhorn reported that we have no gigs booked for January and February gigs could be effected by the local crab issue.

Past President: Sheila Welt suggested we give Gift Cards to Larry Risner & Betty David as Club Thank You's. A motion was made and passed, 6/0/0.

APPOINTED CHAIR REPORTS:

Hospitality: Sheila Welt reported that Holiday Party went well and no left-over decorations.

Membership: Diane Malucelli will be sending out new membership reminders in the New Year and send out membership rosters later in the New Year. New members who joined in November will not have to renew until Jan. 2017.

Librarian: Motion made and passed 6/0/0 to create two Librarian positions: Paper Music Books and Digital Music Books. Jim Blankenship will maintain the paper music books and Karen Hefter will become the Digital Music Librarian.

Editor: Karen Hefter resigned as Editor and John Greitzer will become new Editor. It was suggested that a get-well section be added to the News Letter.

Music Book Committee: Betty David reported that the final Music Book Index revision has been made and Larry Risner will make copies to present to the membership. Bob Malucelli agreed to become the chair of this committee in the future.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ardie Jarrett

East Bay Banjo Club Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: January 13, 2016

Place: Greenery Dining Room, Walnut Creek, CA

Board Members Present: Jack Starr, President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Sheila Welt, Treasurer; Larry Risner, Past President; Betty David, Music Director; Bob Ehrhorn, Booking Agent.

Absent Board of Directors: Bob Malucelli, Vice President

Appointed Chairs Present: Sheila Welt, Hospitality; Bud Peace, Web Master.

Absent Appointed Chairs: Jim Blankenship, Librarian; Karen Hefter, Digital Music Librarian; Diane Malucelli, Membership & Telephone Tree; John Greitzer, Editor.

Guest Present: Guy Black

CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Jack Starr, President.

BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:

Secretary: Ardie Jarrett -The minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer: Sheila Welt – The Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented and will be filed for audit. Sheila presented a 2016 proposed budget. After a discussion and suggested revisions, the proposal was tabled until the February meeting.

Vice President: Bob Malucelli was absent.

Music Director: Betty David requested that we use more monitors. It was pointed out that this request is more difficult because they require more wiring. Don Granberg and Garry Kerr, with Guy’s assistance, will be in charge of the sound system for the January 16th gig in Oakland. More than 2 weeks lead time is needed for a future gig performances.

Booking Agent: Bob Ehrhorn – Other than the January 16th gig in Oakland, we have no other bookings. Bob needs club stationary to send out promotional letters.

Past President: Larry Risner – Larry presented guide lines and suggestions that music directors should follow. Our club procedures document has a very basic statement for each club position. The music director’s function is to coordinate the music for the club at practices, playouts and to encourage all club members to be involved. Larry’s “Memo To The Board of Directors” is attached to these minutes.

Music List: The current East Bay Banjo Club Song List is complete and will be passed out at our practice. The music book is up-dated and complete.

Web Master: Bud Pearce - Bud explained the website fees which total \$191.64.

Hospitality: Sheila Welt had nothing to report.

Editor: John Greitzer was absent but wanted the board to know that his format for the News Letter will be different than Karen Hefter’s because they have different computer programs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Honorary Membership: Bob Ehrhorn moved, 2nd by Sheila Welt, to make Red Higgins an Honorary Member in the East Bay Banjo Club. Motion Passed. She will be presented with her Honorary Membership, along with Harry Higgin’s special shirt, at a future time.

ADJOURMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ardie Jarrett, Secretary

Concord, CA 94524

P.O. Box 5414

www.eastbaybanjo.org

EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

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Meets every Wednesday

From 7 P.M. to 9 P.M.

The Greenery Restaurant

1551 Marchbanks Drive

Walnut Creek, CA 94598