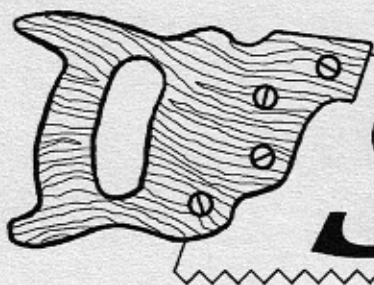


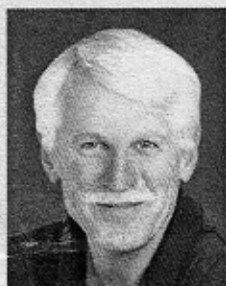
INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL SAW ASSOCIATION



SAW PLAYER NEWS

Vol.10, No.2 www.SawPlayers.org Email: Info@SawPlayers.org (415)331-9661 Designer: Ken Ball Winter 2004/05

2004 IMSA Musical Saw Festival



By Morgan Cowin

The 2004 International Musical Saw Festival on August 7th and 8th was a huge success! Many things came together this year to make it an especially interesting, fun event. The weather was great. We had TEN saw players come all the way from Japan, and everyone enjoyed the fellowship and our mutual interest in the musical saw, meeting old and new friends, and learning from each other. Over the two days, I estimate about 500 people witnessed the fun and were justifiably impressed with the skills, talents and enthusiasm of the many players in attendance.

The festivities began on Saturday afternoon at the Tom Scribner statue in front of Bookstore Santa Cruz. In case you aren't familiar with Tom Scribner, he was an outspoken local personality who played the musical saw on the streets of Santa Cruz, and is honored by being the subject of the world's only life-size bronze sculpture of a saw player (playing the saw) - created by artist Marghe McMahon-Lessard and dedicated in 1978. In addition to the significant continuing support of the community, the statue is one of the main reasons the festival is held in Santa Cruz.

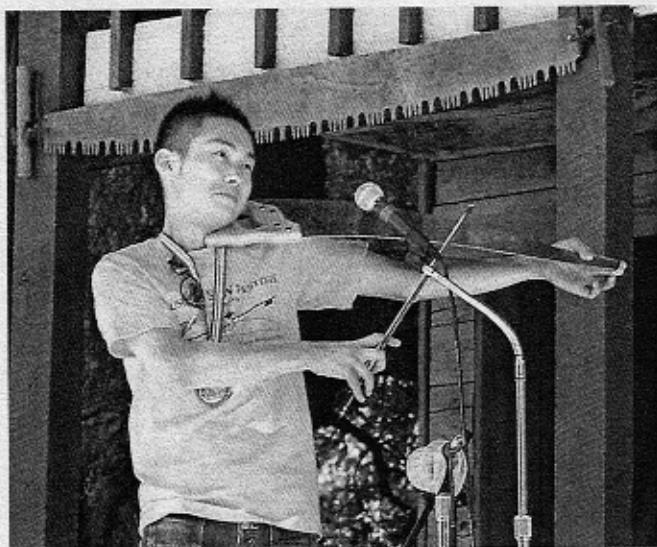
When I arrived around noon, there was already a flurry of activity. People were setting up chairs borrowed from Bookstore Santa Cruz, the flower shop next to the statue had donated some roses and placed them on Tom's lap. The fun began as saw players and other musicians began to play together. More and more saw players showed up, and we soon enjoyed the attention of passers-by, who nearly blocked the large sidewalk area while being amazed at our presence, and the variety and quality of our musicality.

Saturday evening we met at Roaring Camp (in the mountains about 15 or 20 minutes north of Santa Cruz) for a relaxed pot-luck jam. Starting about 6 PM, everyone shared a variety of food



Saturday afternoon gathering of saw players and other musicians in front of Bookstore Santa Cruz. Note: Tom Scribner statue in middle background.

Photo courtesy of David Weiss



2004 Saw-Off Contest First Place winner Hajime Sakita

Photo by David Weiss

and drinks, and socializes. Then, the large group from Japan arrived and really helped get us going. We all enjoyed their enthusiasm and warmth and tried each other's saws and techniques, and played until about 11 PM.

The actual Saw Festival begins early on Sunday morning, as the IMSA Officers, Advisors and other supporters work to get the signs, sound equipment and chairs set up on both the main stage and the "Deer Park" stage for the contest. The crowd started arriving at 10 AM and both individuals and groups performed on the main stage until about 6 PM.

The Saw-Off contest began at 11 AM, and this year there were a total of 22 entrants! The judges were **David Weiss**, **Joe Eding** and **Morgan Cowin**. The First Place Award went to Mr. **Hajime Sakita** from Osaka, Japan. Hajime amazed everyone

I believe there were 33 saw players on the Main Stage for this year's Chorus of Saws!

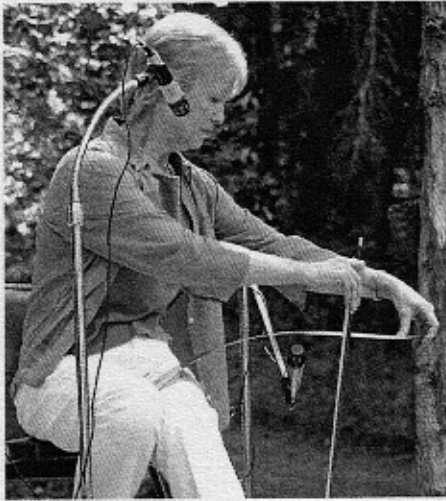
Photo courtesy of David Weiss

with his virtuosity and versatility - even playing the saw while standing and holding the handle under his chin like a violin! Tied for the Second Place Award were **Ursula Knudson** from Sacramento, California and **Janis Reinschmidt** from Yale, South Dakota. The Third Place Award went to Mr. **Seiji Kimoto** from Noda-Shi, Chiba-Ken, Japan. Special Awards went to **Guy Totara** for his novelty act, Ms. **Miwako Kitamoto** for her unique presentation, and **John Jones** for coming the farthest to participate (New Zealand).

A little before three, the judges presented the awards, thanked everyone for participating, and then we had the unique experience of the Chorus of Saws - when all saw players in attendance (I think there were 33 this year) are invited onto the main stage to play a few songs together. It is very difficult to hear your own saw's voice in a crowd, but this year I think we sounded better than usual, and everyone felt like a proud member of our international musical saw playing family.

Every year we have international saw players, but this year's large group from Japan really impressed everyone. Mr. **Hajime Sakita** and Mr. **Yoshikazu Kawaguchi** helped organize the trip, and our different languages didn't hamper our communications. Many of the Japanese (as well as IMSA Secretary/Treasurer **Kenny Blacklock** and his wife **Katy Bridges**) speak both languages, and our mutual enthusiasm for music and the musical saw overcame any problems.





Janis Reinschmidt from Yale, South Dakota tied for Second Place

Photo by David Weiss



Ursula Knudson from Sacramento, California tied for Second Place

Photo by Ralph McCaskey



Seiji Kimoto from Noda-Shi, Chiba-Ken, Japan won Third Place

Photo by Ralph McCaskey

This year we produced an attractive design for the front and back of T-shirts that we used as awards to the contest winners and gave out to everyone performing on stage or helping with the production of the Festival. When designing the "Musical Saw Festival" T-shirts, I wanted a color that would stand out and set our group apart from the masses, and chose a soft orange from an on-line display of colors - but it turned out to be a much brighter orange, more suitable to the color chosen to make highway workers visible...! Most people really liked them, and I only heard a couple of complaints, but the next time we do this I think they will be white - which I'm told "goes with anything." We have a few left for sale if you want one. Look for the ad for them at the end of this article.

We wish to acknowledge and give a **special THANK YOU** to the many people who helped produce and promote this year's Saw Festival. Our venue at **Roaring Camp** is graciously donated to us by C.E.O. **Georgie Clark**. We received a valuable grant from the **Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County** with the help of **Nabil Ghachem** and **IMSA Advisor Mark Varner**. **Terry Green** and **Dean Monroe** from **KUSP Radio** donated publicity. **IMSA Vice President Art Peterson** and his friend **Vince French** again provided our sound system and helped Master of Ceremonies (and past Saw Off Contest winner) **Thomas Spearance** with production on the main stage. **Charlie & Viola Blacklock**, **Kenneth Blacklock** (Charlie's son), **Kenny Blacklock** (Charlie's grandson) and **Katy Bridges**, **Patrick & Jan Weldon**, **Caroline McCaskey**, **David Weiss**, **Bruce Bratton**,

Allan de Lay, **Joe Eding**, **Luther & Lillian Harris** and others were invaluable in making this Saw Festival one of the best EVER! **Thank you also to all the contestants, performers and friends who attended and gave us your support!**

We encourage all saw players to make plans to attend next year's Musical Saw Festival, (held annually on the 2nd Sunday in August, and the Saturday before) - **August 13th and 14th, 2005.**

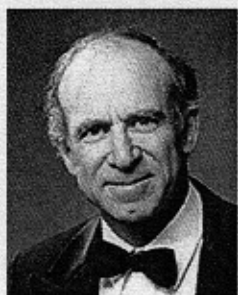
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(Orange with black text & graphics printed on both sides)

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Saw Tips : Judging the “Saw-Off Competition”



By David Weiss

What a Picnic it was!! The weather was perfect, the crowd was large and enthusiastic, the support troops (sound and stage crew, Roaring Camp personnel, IMSA officers, etc.) worked well together.

For the competition, we listened to twenty-two saw players, and all the judges agree that the overall standard of playing is continuing to improve year after year. Add to that the “specialty” acts, and we were VERY pleased with the weekend! All this made the “Saw-Off Competition” quite difficult to judge, though, and it took us quite a while to determine the winners. Bravo to all who entered!

What turned out to be the most important aspects for judging were, in rough order of priority:

- 1 – plays on pitch
- 2 – notes respond easily to the bow
- 3 – good sense of rhythm
- 4 – choice of piece (challenging enough to show advanced skills)
- 5 – plays with lots of feeling and musicality

- 6 – ability to play a good range of volume, from soft to loud
- 7 – good range of notes from low to high (an ideal range would be 2 octaves+)
- 8 – avoids excessive bow scratch, bow noise
- 9 – visual appeal or special characteristics to provide a memorable performance

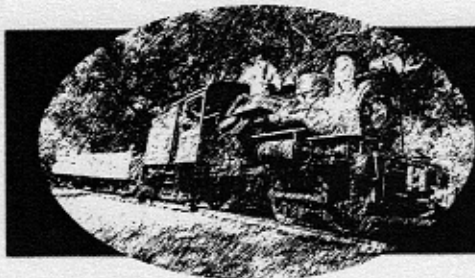
While it’s still relatively fresh in my mind, here is one suggestion for the next competition: choose music that doesn’t have you “resting” for more than a measure or two. YOU are the one taking the audition, not your background tape! Keep your selection short – two minutes or less. It doesn’t take the judges much time to get a clear picture of your playing ability, and time is “of the essence” at competitions. This past event we spent close to two hours listening to everyone. We didn’t want to appear rude by cutting someone short, but it is very important to keep things moving. There’s so much else going on the day of the Picnic, and none of us wants to miss too much of the other activities! BRAVO again to all of you who competed — it takes a lot of guts to get up there in front of everybody — and congratulations to the winners!

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and look forward to seeing you next Summer at Roaring Camp.

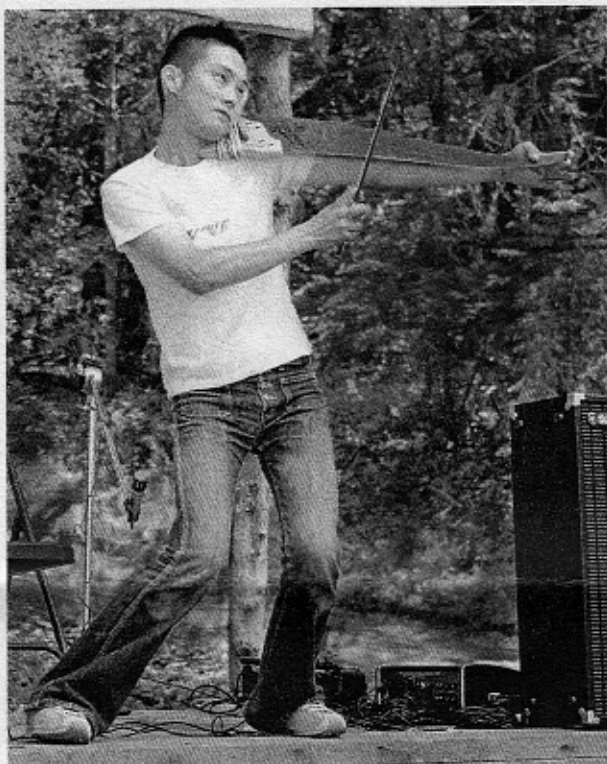


The judges and contestants for the 2004 Saw-Off Competition.

Photo courtesy of David Weiss



2004 IMSA Musical Saw Festival Roaring Camp Photo Insert



First Place winner Hajime Sakita demonstrating his unique style.

Photo by David Weiss



Yuko Yamakawa and Miwako Kitamoto are happy with their new T-shirts, as Thomas Spearance, Seiji Kimoto, Kazu Kawaguchi and Morgan Cowin look on

Photo by David Weiss



IMSA Advisor Caroline McCaskey plays with Charlie Blacklock and Guy Totaro

Photo by Allan deLay



David Weiss has modified a short bow with a piano hammer to make a combination mallet and bow.

Photo courtesy of David Weiss



Keiko Tanaka plays at the Saw-Off competition
Photo by David Weiss



Morgan Cowin, Craig Paice and Yuko Yamakawa at the Chorus of Saws
Photo by David Weiss



An unusual rolling wagon with saw handle support at the Saturday jam in Santa Cruz
Photo by David Weiss



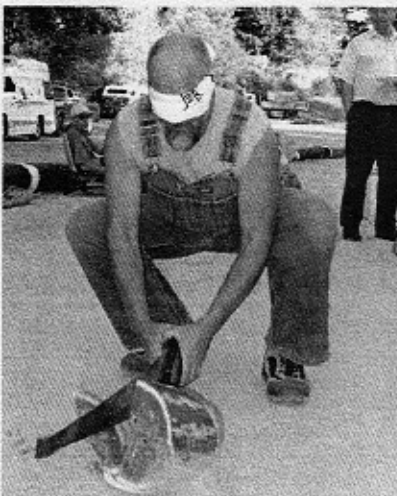
Lillian Harris plays her Austrian Tuned Cow Bells while husband Luther accompanies her on his saw

Photo by David Weiss



IMSA Vice President Art Peterson plays with Craig Paice on saw (from England), while a friend blows bubbles for a special effect

Photo by David Weiss



Following instructions by Kazu Kawaguchi, Master of Ceremonies Thomas Spearance tries to cut a watermelon with his Lame Sonore (French musical saw) Saturday evening at the pot luck/jam

Photo by David Weiss



Morgan Cowin, David Weiss, Hajime Sakita and Joe Eding play together after the workshop

Photo courtesy of David Weiss

A GREAT LOSS TO THE MUSICAL SAW WORLD!

I regret to inform you that well-known, well-liked Allan J. deLay has died. Allan played the musical saw for over seven decades, and he probably performed on his saw for more people than anyone else in history (over 250,000!). He came to many saw festivals, and nearly everyone in attendance noticed him. He was a VERY active guy, driving around the country in his 1968 VW visiting his many friends, going to the Boy Scout Jamborees, being involved in so many things. His personality and spirit were inspirational.

The Summer 2003 issue of the Saw Player News featured Allan in the first "Featured Saw Players" column. I will email the text of the article upon request if you write me at: Morgan@DistinctivePhotos.com

If any of you care to send a card or note to his family, you can address it to his daughter:
Donna deLay
2801 N.E. 91st Ave.
Battle Ground, WA 98604 (USA)

We in the IMSA join many others in our sadness for his family and friends. He was a wonderful man and already leaves a hole in our hearts.

Swimmer known for cutting-edge music

Allan Joseph deLay, 89, won swimming and diving medals in between gigs playing the singing saw

By AMY MARTINEZ STARKE
THE OREGONIAN

Allan Joseph deLay, a longtime Portland photographer, world-class age-group swimmer and diver, player of the singing saw, Boy Scout, adventurer and father of bluesman Paul deLay, has died.

Mr. deLay was found dead at his Milwaukie home Sunday, Jan. 16, 2005. He was 89.

Mr. deLay was born May 4, 1915, in Topeka, Kan. He first heard the musical saw as a boy and played a 30-inch Sandvik saw he bought years ago in Mendocino, Calif.

When he was 12 and sold newspapers, he bought his first folding Kodak camera, learned to shoot and develop pictures, and earned a Boy Scout merit badge, the first of many.

In 1931, he moved west with his mother, who was by then divorced from his father, and he lived with his father in Hollywood, Calif., for a while. He then moved to Ore-

gon, where he harvested cranberries, worked as an elevator attendant and delivery boy, and at a dental supply house. Mr. deLay attended Franklin High School, later earned a GED certificate and served in the Air Force. After the service, he landed a job in a photo studio and in 1947 was hired as a photographer by The Oregonian.



DELAY
Worked as
photographer

He photographed everything from the Vanport flood to landscapes and action shots. His portraits included Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Lucille Ball, Archie Moore, Bela Lugosi, Katharine Hepburn, and Presidents Eisenhower, Hoover and Nixon. He left the paper in 1959, setting up his own photography business.

In 2002, he was honored for 75 years of Scouting, the first person in the Cascade Pacific Council to be so recognized. He was famous for his fire-by-friction kits.

Over 74 years all over the world, he played thousands of concerts on the musical saw: for service clubs, fraternal organizations and grange halls; several with the Oregon Symphony; one for King Karl Gustav of Sweden; and another for 60,000 Boy Scouts. He opened Blazer games and played with his son, Paul.

In 2003, he made a CD, "Sawing Through the Memories," on MAH (Michael Allen Harrison) Records with pianist and composer Harrison. He played a full set of concerts with Harrison the past holiday season.

At age 72, Mr. deLay became involved in the World Masters Aquatic Championships, winning awards in swimming and diving. In 1993, he took the top award in the United States for the 50-meter freestyle course, posting 38.4 seconds.

In 1996, he traveled to Sheffield, England, to compete in the World Masters Aquatic Championship in swimming and diving. At the 1998 Nike World Championships in Portland, Mr. deLay took two silvers — in 1-meter and platform diving — and the gold in the 3-meter diving competition.

In 2000, at the State Games of Oregon, Mr. deLay took gold and

set records in the 1-meter and 3-meter diving events as well as the 50-meter swimming event. At the World Masters Championships in Munich, Germany, Mr. deLay took gold in the 1-meter, 3-meter and platform diving events and won bronze medals in the 50 meter breaststroke and freestyle. He told friends and family that he was looking forward to turning 90 in May and competing alone in the over-90 age group at the world championships this summer in Edmonton, Alberta.

He traveled extensively with the New Oregon Singers and lived by himself on a deserted atoll in Tahiti in the late 1970s, foraging for fruit and spearing fish. He took numerous transcontinental trips in a '68 VW Squareback.

His first marriage ended in divorce. In 1945, he married Mary Kate White; she died in 1994.

Mr. deLay is survived by daughters Laura deLay-Morris of Oregon City and Donna deLay of Battle Ground, Wash.; son, Paul of Portland; and two grandchildren.

Memorial services are tentatively scheduled for his birthday in May. Arrangements by Crown Memorial.

Switzerland - Land of Chocolate, Cowbells and...Musical Saws!

Article and photos By Natalia 'SawLady' Paruz



When I was little, my family lived in Switzerland. From time to time I revisit my childhood home and I have learned some fascinating things about the Swiss traditions of playing the musical saw.

You know how we all teach ourselves to play the saw, right? But somehow we all seem to come up with more or less similar playing techniques for holding the saw and applying the bow. Well, in Switzerland people have taught themselves to play the saw, too, but they have come up with totally different playing techniques, not only from those we in the USA use, but even different from one area of Switzerland to the next!

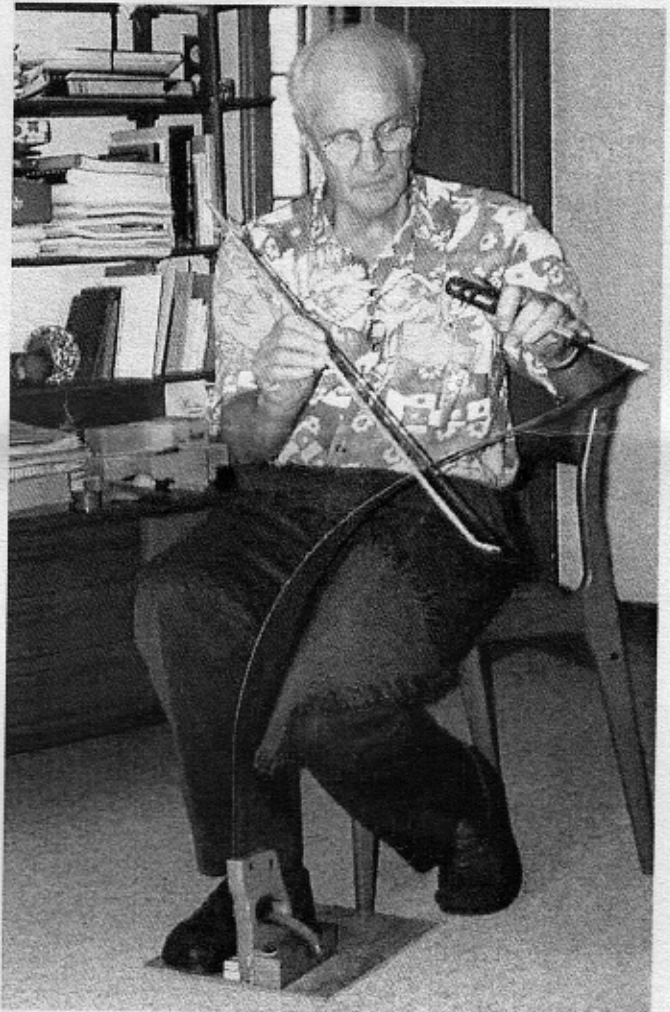
The first two sawyers I encountered in Switzerland were a father and son, both playing the saw in Lucerne. The father manufactured their saws himself. The saws he made look similar to the French *Lame Sonore*, but his tip handle is made of metal. These two sawyers play in the "regular" manner of playing the saw with which we are all familiar.

The 2nd sawyer I encountered in Switzerland is Kurt Feldman in Jegenstorf. He plays the saw in a kneeling position! His left shin is on the floor, his right foot standing next to his left knee. The saw



is placed between the left knee and the right foot, leaning towards the left. Sorry, no photo.

The 3rd sawyer I met is Alfons Eschle in Laufen. Alfons is a conductor by profession, and one of the best theremin players in the world. He has invented a style of his own of playing the saw. He uses a Feldman saw with an overall length of 42". He places the saw's handle on the floor (in a



holding device), and plays it as if it were a cello. For a tip grip he uses a screw driver. Alfons has an excellent ear, and he also developed a technique of playing two notes at once on the saw, in an interval of either a minor or a major third, or of an octave. We enjoyed playing an improvisational duet of Mozart together. Alfons has many saw students and he is a wonderful musician. For more info on him and his saw technique: www.datacomm.ch/fesch/musicalsaw.html

Now we come to the part where you'll see just how popular saw playing in Switzerland is. I told Alfons that the following day I will be visiting a restaurant in Lauenen, where on the wall there is a statue of a saw player. Alfons had never heard of that place, so he said he will travel there too, and meet me at the restaurant. The following evening, after

Alfons didn't show up at that restaurant, I called to ask what happened. He thought I didn't show up! It turned out he went to a different restaurant in the same area, where there happened to also be a musical saw on the wall! It seemed like



the town of Lauenen has saw players everywhere... The restaurant I went to is situated in a gorgeous and very mountainous area. The view is breath taking. On the front wall of Restaurant Lauenensee is a big wooden statue of two men sawing a log with a two-man saw, and a statue of a man playing the saw. The statue is made of wood, but the saw the figure is playing is a real saw.

Notice anything "unusual" with the way the figure plays the saw? The bow is held on the inside, between the blade and the player's body! This is the way Simon Addor plays his saw. Simon is the owner of the restaurant, and has been playing the saw with his band in local restaurants and hotels for many years.

In conclusion, when people say that Switzerland is famous for its delicious chocolate and its rustic scenery of cows grazing with bells on their necks, you may add that it's also famous for its different saw playing techniques!



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There are 36 letters and spaces per line with a two line minimum for \$13/issue. Additional lines are \$3.50 each. Space must be left between words and punctuation marks require a space also. If the word does not fit on the end of the line, please use the next line. Your area code and phone number must be included in your ad information. The Saw Player News reserves the right to refuse any ads. Send payment in U.S. Dollars with your ad payable to IMSA, 31 South 40 Pier, Sausalito, CA 94965 U.S.A.

The Story of the "Original" Musical Saw

from Mary C. Dawson, Mussehl & Westphal Musical Saws



Hi, this is Mary Kay. I'd like to share with you a bit of history about the musical saw tradition and of *Mussehl & Westphal*.

Handsaw playing originated in the Ozarks, according to legend, sometime in the late 19th century, and the saw, as a musical instrument, found a niche in vaudeville. Clarence Mussehl of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin discovered the sound in 1919 at the "Majestic" Theater in Milwaukee. The sound intrigued and fascinated the young entrepreneur who, experimenting on his own, discovered how to bend the saw to produce music.

Experimentation with different steels and measurements finally enabled Clarence to achieve a two-octave range and a smooth, clear-as-a-bell tone. Eventually Clarence teamed with Marion Westphal in a vaudeville act. She also played the musical saw and the two of them decided to produce a



refined saw for sale beginning in 1921. Later on Clarence purchased the rights to her name and ever since *Mussehl & Westphal* has remained synonymous with the musical saw!

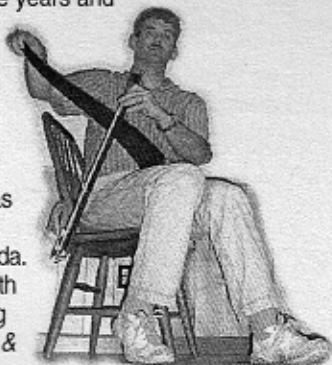
Demand for the *Mussehl & Westphal* never



Dan Wallace (above) demonstrates his vibrato style on his gold-plated musical saw for an October 1980 WABC-TV Chicago news report.

diminished even when radio came along and displaced vaudeville. The languid, melancholy sound of the saw has inspired saw players through the years and the novelty of the musical saw ensured its inclusion at countless ho-downs. Its versatility enabled players of all types of music to employ the unique and marvelous sound of the musical saw.

Dan Wallace and I met while he was in flight training and a member of the Naval Cadet Choir in Pensacola, Florida. He had always had a natural ability with music. In the late 1970s while enjoying his grandfather's gold-plated *Mussehl & Westphal* saw he realized that an ad he'd seen in a "Popular Mechanics" magazine was for the same musical saw company in Fort Atkinson which had produced his own saw decades



Jim Wallace continues to advise on the finer points of saw playing and offers *Mussehl & Westphal* his service as the torch-bearer of the new generation.

ago! Before long Dan and Clarence met, and became fast friends. They traveled the state together playing the saw for folks along the way, and a musical bond was spun between them.

The appreciation Clarence had for Dan was genuine and mutual. Clarence, not having any family to continue the business, agreed to pass the torch to his new friend. The business would carry on, of this he was assured. The transfer was to take place in January of 1979 because he had hoped to fill orders during one last Christmas season, but his unexpected death in September hastened the transfer.

Folks always enjoy an impromptu concert by an artist with a snappy demeanor and a quick wit. Dan fit this profile and with his means as an airline pilot, he was able to act as "ambassador" for the saw as he crossed the continent. He was a frequent visitor to blue grass festivals throughout the country, occasionally bringing our sons along with him to entertain and have fun as he eagerly demonstrated the arrestingly beautiful "Mussehl & Westphal" saw. He became friends with many sawing luminaries such as Tom Scribner, Jim Leonard, Moses Josiah and others.



The Wallaces, Christmas 1982.



Clarence in Aug. of '78



Mary Kay Dawson continues to fill orders for the specially manufactured, marvelous sounding *Mussehl & Westphal* Musical Saw.

To those unaware, Dan, at the age of 43, met his eternal reward in a late 1982 private aircraft accident. This misfortune did not hinder our family's desire to carry on with the tradition of the saw. Only one name can be known as "the original" – *Mussehl & Westphal*.

In the four years before his death, Dan and I enjoyed corresponding and conversing with and meeting hundreds of fine folks who call the musical saw their instrument. To this day, with the support of my husband Steve and family, I continue to insure the professional presentation and quality of sound of the *M&W* original. Check out our web site at www.musicalsaws.com



Joan (Wallace) Schneider, currently residing in Ethiopia, has brought the saw with her too!

NOTE: If a green dot appears next to your name, your membership has expired. To continue to receive the SAW PLAYER NEWS, please send a check and a completed Membership Application. Thanks for your support!

International Musical Saw Association

IMSA, c/o
31 South 40 Pier
Sausalito, CA 94965
www.SawPlayers.org



Application for Membership to the International Musical Saw Association

Annual Membership Fees are \$20/Individual, \$25/Family.

Dues entitle Members to 3 issues of the Saw Player News, and eligibility to enter (with \$5 entry fee) the "Saw-Off Competition" at our annual Saw Players Picnic and Music Festival.

Please send your check with completed application to: IMSA, c/o 31 South 40 Pier Sausalito, CA 94965 U.S.A.



International Musical Saw Association

Name(s): _____

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Saw players frequently contact us to look for fellow saw players in their areas, but we don't want to give out your name and contact information without your permission. We do not intend to share your information with anyone but fellow saw players.

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