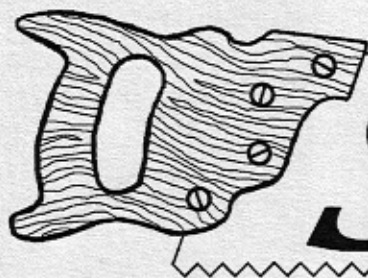


INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL SAW ASSOCIATION



SAW PLAYER NEWS

Vol. 13, No.2 www.SawPlayers.org Email: Info@SawPlayers.org (707)773-1230 Designer: Ken Ball Summer 2009

Remembrances of Charlie Blacklock



By Art Peterson

Playing music with Charlie Blacklock was more than a musical experience. I first met Charlie at a folk festival in San Francisco. He was giving a musical saw workshop and I decided to check it out. What a sound, wow, that saw just sang in his hands and everyone was enthralled with Charlie. After the workshop, Charlie - who said he had seen me play guitar - asked if I'd back him up on the main stage. Well, I asked him what tunes he'd be playing and we just started to get it together when a fella came running in and said, "Charlie, hurry up, you're on..." Charlie quickly put his saw and bow in his case (he'd made a wooden case for his saws and covered it with leopard skin paper) and we ran onto the stage. Everything went well since Charlie knew what songs to play with someone who hadn't played with him before and, since he played harmonica along with his saw, he knew what key he'd be in. The only mishap was that, in his haste to put his saw in it's case, he had caught a large paper clip on it which caused a buzz in his playing until he realized the problem

and knocked the paper clip off with his bow. Charlie always said that was the first time he played saw with a "fuzz tone."

A while later Charlie called and said he had a gig in Benecia at Rosebud's Ice Cream Parlor in a couple months; he said he'd like me to play it and he also asked me if I knew an accordion player. Well, fate was with us, I had just started playing accordion again myself (I took lessons for a year when I was eight years old) and so, I worked hard leading up to that gig and became Charlie's



Art Peterson & Charlie Blacklock in the early 1980's



Charlie's Band – Benecia” – Left to Right: Nina Gerber, Art Peterson, Charlie Blacklock and Bill Carpenter.

accordion player. The band that night was not lacking; we had Bill Carpenter on bass and tuba, Gus Garelick (California State Fiddle Champion) on mandolin and fiddle, and Nina Gerber (Kate Wolf's guitarist at the time) on guitar and rhythm saw. Charlie had brought a saw horse, a 2x4 and an extra saw to the gig and had Nina play rhythm on one tune by sawing on that 2x4. Nina did a great job, but I think she let Charlie know she'd rather play guitar so that was the only gig where we had rhythm saw.

We went on to play the first "Festival of the Saws" in Santa Cruz as well as street fairs and clubs all around California and did some gigs in Oregon and Washington on what we called our "Great Northwest Tour." Actually we'd also planned to do a lot of street playing on that tour, but we ran into rain most of the time. Charlie was good at playing the streets; we played San Francisco's waterfront regularly for two summers, and once for a large crowd of students in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Charlie would find someone who would like to try playing the

saw and we'd do "Just Because" with them, Charlie on harmonica, in B \flat . Charlie would get the person playing that B \flat note and tell them to just keep it going in rhythm with us, hitting the saw with a pencil, and at the end we'd stop and oft times you'd hear that B \flat note still singing off the saw. Charlie and the crowd would cheer for that person and then Charlie would ask if they'd mind passing the hat for us. Worked everytime, although Charlie didn't really care about the money, it was the show that counted.

Charlie was full of ideas, always "cuttin' up" and always a good interview for the press. He just had a way about him that grabbed attention and made people smile. What a privilege it was to make music with him!

NOTE: Art recently updated the home page on the IMSA website (www.SawPlayers.org) – If you click on "Charlie Blacklock" you will go to this article, plus another article about Charlie by Martin Snapp.

The 2009 Saw Festival Is Almost Here!

Hello Everyone! I apologize for the last-minute reminder (and late mailing), but we hope you can join us at the 31st Annual Saw Festival on August 8th & 9th!!

We expect to have up to a dozen saw players coming from Japan, and one saw player from England, as well as others from around the U.S.A. and Canada. 2-man crosscut saw virtuoso Bill Heier is returning, and the famous David Weiss will be coming as well. We never know who or how many will attend, but we hope the world economic situation doesn't impact our attendance too much. It's ALWAYS interesting, educational and FUN to meet other saw Players (and their families and friends)! We are all from different backgrounds and different parts of the world, but it is a wonderful community of open, supportive, and NICE people!!!

Go to the IMSA website (www.SawPlayers.org) and click on "Festinfo" for information about the various events and times (open jams, the Saw-Off contest and presentation of awards, the workshop, the Chorus of Saws, etc.). Details about the Saw-Off contest rules are also there, as well as some Lodging information near the Saw Festival (though finding a room near the Saw Festival at this time to may be very difficult).

Included with this issue of the Saw Player News is the current Saw Festival Flyer, with our 2009 publicity announcement on the back. You may be able to copy the publicity announcement to get your local media's attention, and help them write their stories.

We will have a NEW Saw Festival T-shirt again, with some new illustrations by saw player/graphic



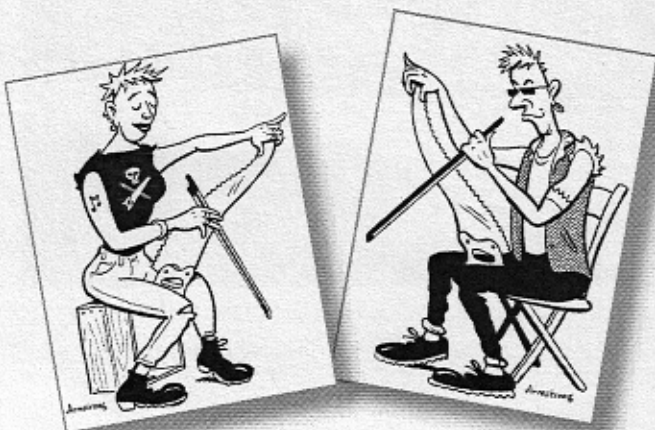
"Chorus of Saws" at the Saw Players Picnic and Musical Festival at Roaring Camp, California



Saturday Jam near the statue of Tom Scribner.

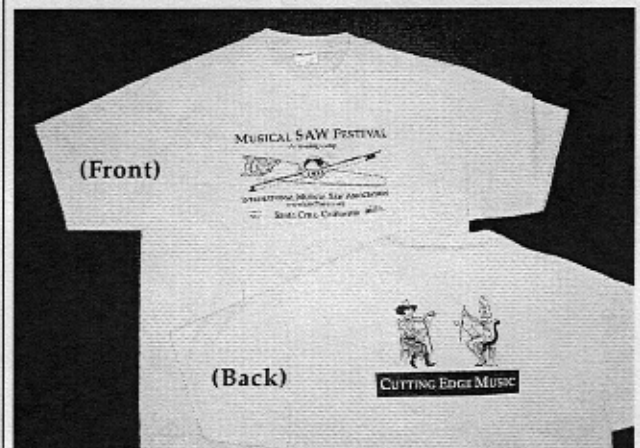
designer Bob Armstrong on the back. This time – although most saw players are older (40's – 80's), we are ALSO trying to encourage younger saw players to get interested in the musical saw (and there ARE more young saw players coming to the Saw Festivals) – we are using stylized “Goth Girl” and “Punk Boy” saw player illustrations instead of the more “mature” caricatures and the saw-playing bear we've used in the past.

All in all this should be another FUN Saw Festival, and we hope to see you there!!!



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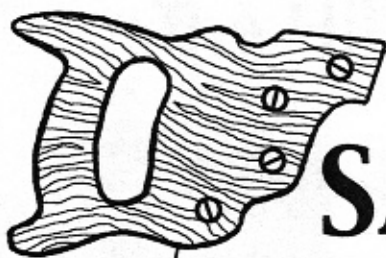
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International Musical Saw Association



SAW PLAYERS

(And Friends)

PICNIC & MUSIC FESTIVAL

To be held near Santa Cruz, California at

SINCE 1978!

Roaring Camp SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2009

10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

International Musical Saw Contest

Musical Saw Workshop

ALSO, on SATURDAY, August 8 at 1 PM for an OPEN JAM in front of Bookshop Santa Cruz, located at 1520 Pacific Ave. - AND - at 6-10 PM for a pot-luck dinner and OPEN JAM in the outer parking lot at Roaring Camp. COME ON DOWN & PLAY!

▶ ALL MUSICIANS INVITED! ◀

Bring YOUR (ACOUSTIC) Instrument!

Musical Saws • Guitars • Fiddles • Harmonicas • Accordions • Singers
Banjos • Mandolins • Bass • Cellos • And MORE!

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(there is a small parking fee)

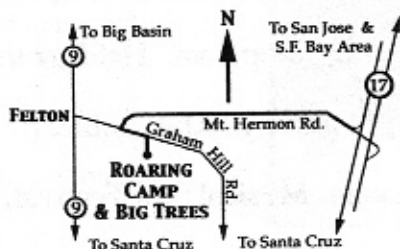
Funded, in part, by a grant from the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County



For Festival Information:
www.SawPlayers.org

Call: Morgan Cowin
(415)459-7722

Write: IMSA, 31 South 40 Pier,
Sausalito, CA 94965



For Directions to
Roaring Camp & Big Trees
in Felton (just North of Santa Cruz)
Call: (831)335-4484
www.RoaringCamp.com

Take the Mt. Hermon Exit off Hwy. 17 to Graham Hill Rd., Then Left 1/4 mile to Roaring Camp.

For more information contact:
Morgan Cowin, President
International Musical Saw Players Association
(415)459-7722 Email: Sawman@DistinctivePhotos.com
Download a Saw Festival Flyer at: www.SawPlayers.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

For great music that's a cut above the rest, come to the 31st Annual International Musical Saw Festival, Saturday and Sunday, August 8 and 9, 2009, in beautiful Santa Cruz County, California.

The cutting edge music starts Saturday, August 8, 2009 at 1:00 PM, with a free acoustic jam near the world's only life-sized bronze statue of a saw player - in front of Bookstore Santa Cruz, located at 1520 Pacific Avenue. Next comes a free potluck dinner and jam at 6:00 PM in the outer parking lot of Roaring Camp in Felton, just seven miles north of Santa Cruz.

The big event happens Sunday, August 9, at Roaring Camp when the world's greatest saw players come out of the woodwork to join other acoustic musicians in a variety of musical performances. You'll hear bluegrass, country, folk, gospel, blues, classical, and even show tunes (believe it or not, no heavy metal) throughout the day. Festivities start at 10:00 AM, with spontaneous acoustic jams throughout the day. There's a Saw-Off competition from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and a Chorus of the Saws at 3:00 PM., with up to 50 saw players trying to play in unison.

And for those who want to learn how to play music that really has some teeth in it, there's a free Musical Saw Workshop at 4:00 PM.

The entire event is free, and fun for the whole family. For more information, check out www.SawPlayers.org, or www.RoaringCamp.com. Held by the International Musical Saw Association, this event is sponsored in part by KUSP Public Radio and the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County. Come to the 31th annual Musical Saw Festival, and say you saw it here first!

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Saw Players Hall of Fame

The Hillbilly Sawist - Albert Everidge (c. 1900 - 1955)



By Natalia 'SawLady' Paruz
- www.SawLady.com

The 'South Georgia Highballers' was a unique three-piece blues band from the Macon area of Georgia.

The instrumental combination was of musical saw, guitar, and fiddle. Vander Everidge played guitar and his nephew Albert Everidge played the saw. Fiddler Melgie Ward rounded out the trio and is remembered for some of the loudest foot-tapping action in the business. They made six recordings for the Okeh label in the 1920s.

According to the book 'Country Music Originals' by Tony Russell, a few other old time musicians played the saw back then (Asa Martin was one of them), but the only appearance of a musical saw on a 1920's hillbilly record ("Green River Train" and "Mister Johnson Turn Me Aloose") was by sawist Albert Everidge.

Albert was the youngest of the trio - he was in his late twenties when he started to perform with the group. They were active during the 20's and 30's playing at fiddler conventions and town halls all over Georgia.

Albert used to compete at conventions in two categories: playing the saw and dancing the buck-and-wing, at which he was a champion. Albert once tried to compete with the fiddlers with his saw but the officials running the contest ruled him out. One of the participating fiddlers spoke up for him saying: "If he can play a tune on that thing, I'll break my fiddle over this chair and give him any money I've made". Albert played "The Waltz You Saved For Me" and the fiddler did what he said he would do.

Albert played the saw sitting on a high stool (such as a bar stool) as opposed to a chair, like most sawists use.

He played tunes such as "Fifty Years Ago Waltz" and "Girl of My Dreams" on the saw. Albert's son, Al, said his father could make the saw talk. His other son, Rubin, said that his father would shop for a saw for half a day - plucking it, bending it. His favorite saw brand to play was the Disston.

In the 1930's Albert started a family and needed a steady income. He worked first as a tree surgeon, then as a termite exterminator. The band broke up and soon after Vander was killed in a car accident. Albert's three sons Alton, Al, and Reuben Everidge all became musicians and carried on the family tradition working and recording in a series of string bands. Rubin became the director of the NY State Country Music Hall of Fame.

Listen to Albert's saw playing at: <http://music.barnesandnoble.com/search/mediaplayer.asp?ean=788065778026&track=10&disc=3>

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Better Intonation for Dummies!

by David Weiss



One of the main reasons there are so few good saw players is because of how difficult it is to play in tune. Unlike most "normal" instruments, there are no keys, frets, valves, or tone holes to help guide us. We only have our ears. Without paying close attention to proper tuning, over time it is easy to become accustomed to one's own "scale," believing that it sounds pretty good. In reality it could be horribly out of tune! Here are some saw tips that you can use while practicing to help train your ear and improve your ability to play in tune.

1) Become very good friends with a piano player! The more you play with a piano background, the better your ear will become. Have the pianist play and hold chords or even single notes that you can try to match your pitch against. Then try playing very slow scales or melodies in unison. By regularly getting together with a pianist, not only will your pitch improve, but so will your overall musicianship. Trust me, I know. I married one!

2) Use an electronic tuner. Electronic tuners come in all sizes from pocket size to large desktop models that have many advanced features. Using an electronic tuner is very easy. Simply play the note you wish to tune (avoid using too much vibrato – in fact, try to eliminate vibrato altogether for this exercise to be most effective) and a meter on the device will tell you if you are sharp (above the pitch) or flat (below the pitch). Very slightly adjust the bend on your saw, and the needle will move. When it points straight up, that particular note becomes perfectly in tune! The Korg model #CA30 costs about \$30, and is the one I recommend for my students. It's the same one I have with me when performing with an orchestra or in recording sessions. Smaller than a pack of cigarettes, it runs on two AA batteries. There are different methods for using a tuner that are worth experimenting with. Besides watching the tuner as you play from note to note, you can record yourself (without looking at the tuner), then play it back and watch the tuner needle move with each note of the melody. You may notice certain consistencies – some notes always want to go sharp, others to go flat. Becoming aware of these tendencies will help you compensate and find a much truer pitch. More elaborate tuners can play a "drone" note (pick any note you want and the machine will play and hold it), and then you can devise ways of playing in unison, octaves, or any other interval with the steady tone. Try sustaining the saw tone as purely as possible (no vibrato) and holding it until you think you are making a perfect interval with the drone pitch (3rds, 5ths, etc). If the interval is "very close" but not exact, you'll hear slight rhythmic beats occurring – the closer you get to "perfect" the slower those beats become. This won't work for everyone, but it can be fun to experiment with it.

3) The best music teacher I ever had always stressed the importance of SINGING the tune before playing it. If you hate the sound of your voice, humming the tune can work, too. In order to more clearly hear the tones, try holding your hand(s) slightly cupped behind your ears (or even just a finger over one ear can be helpful). This is a technique that many professional singers use when they need to focus in on their own pitches, keeping them separate from other ambient noise. When you think of singing with a view to good intonation, the concept is to hear the note a split second before you actually sing it. Try singing a simple arpeggio or scale with good intonation. When you begin to internalize this concept, you will naturally start using it for your saw playing. The Germans call our instrument the Singende Sage, or the "SINGING SAW" – so let's all practice singing a little bit in order to play better in tune.

4) Use a search engine (like Google) on the internet. It is so amazing how much you can find with a few mouse clicks. Try searching for "ear training," "music intonation exercises," "playing in tune," etc., and you'll come across tens of thousands of links with advice!

I wouldn't be a bit surprised if some of you may have found other methods or tricks for achieving good intonation --- please write in and share that with us!

Wishing you all a happy summer, and hoping that as many of you as possible can attend one (or both!) of this summer's Saw Festivals.

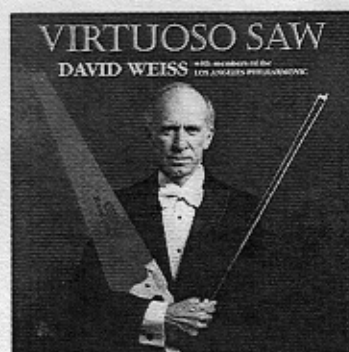
David Weiss

Website: www.davidweissgallery.com
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David Weiss bends steel in his bare hands, backed by members of the L.A. Philharmonic in this cutting edge CD of pop and classical favorites. "The most beguiling sounds emanated from David Weiss... heavy metal maestro enthralls with his handsaw artistry... He came, he sawed, he conquered." (Los Angeles Times)

He came, he sawed, he conquered." (Los Angeles Times)

Play List:

Misty, Sweet Georgia Brown, Intermezzo from Carmen, Eleanor Rigby, The Swan, Yesterday, Habañera, Scarborough Fair, When I'm 64, Summertime, Gymnopedie, Bach Arioso, The Rainbow Connection

Credit card order online at www.cdbaby.com/davidweiss or by check - \$14.95, payable to Cut Time Records.

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As a benefit to readers of the Saw Player News, those who pay by check directly to Cut Time Records will receive FREE SHIPPING within the U.S., and Cut Time Records will pay any applicable sales tax.



Natalia Paruz recently produced the "7th annual NYC Musical Saw Festival" with a formal concert including the premiers of new music written for the saw, an art exhibit, a workshop about the technique of "multiphonics" - playing two notes at once on the saw, using overtones. The event was held on Saturday, July 18th, 2009, at 2 PM at Trinity Church in Astoria, New York. You can find out more information at: www.MusicalSawFestival.org

Natalia also worked hard to make an attempt to set a new world record for the Guinness Book of World Records for having the most documented number of saw players playing together - ever. It has not been confirmed yet, but she had 53 saw players at the Festival. Congratulations in advance to Natalia!

ADVERTISE In The Saw Player News!

We are now accepting both Classified and Display advertising for music-related and Musical Saw-related merchandise and services. You can now reach hundreds of saw players at a reasonable cost!

Terms and Prices for Display ads: Display ads should be "camera ready" (ready to print without resizing or editing).

Full Page.....	(7.5" wide by 10" high) -	\$ 200
Half Page.....	(7.5" wide by 4.75" high) -	\$ 100
Quarter Page.....	(3.75" wide by 4.75" high) -	\$ 50
Business Card.....	(3.75" wide by 2" high)	\$ 25
Flyer Insertion.....	(8.5" wide by 11" high) -	\$ 200

Terms and Prices for Classified ads: Classified ads should be typed or printed to eliminate errors. 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, 110 Prospect St., Petaluma, CA 94952 U.S.A.

Announcements

We received a note about the death of Roy Maine - a sweet man who came to two recent Saw Festivals:

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my father, Roy Maine, on March 8, 2009 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. It was the culmination of a painful fight with bone cancer.

Dad really enjoyed attending the musical saw festivals in 2006 and 2007. He was a member of a singing group that performed for seniors in nursing homes and care facilities. As part of the program, he would play a number of tunes on the saw. It would always draw a lot of attention, as I am not aware of any other saw player in the area.

I would like to thank you for the camaraderie at the competitions.

Roy Maine

We will miss him. May he rest in peace

On a personal note, IMSA president Morgan Cowin recently learned that he has "Follicular B-cell Lymphoma" - which is a fast-growing, large-cell type type of cancer - but it's also one of the types that IS curable with chemotherapy, and it has not spread to other internal organs or his bone marrow. He just had his 2nd of 6 chemo appointments last Thursday, and it IS working (ending in mid October)! The first treatment 4 weeks ago started working immediately and he still feels fine overall - no pain, discomfort, nausea etc.

The most obvious thing is that the chemo is almost guaranteed to make you lose ALL your hair (in a month or two even his eyebrows and eyelashes) will be gone! "My hair is about 95% gone on my head - though some of my bald friends LIKE the wispy fuzz I have left! I MAY shave it all off before the Saw Festival. But, it's supposed to start growing back a few months after the last chemo, and I'm supposed to be back to "normal" (though I've never been TOO normal) about a year after the last treatment. My prognosis is positive, as is my attitude."

"Although we are all struggling in ways, I feel very lucky to live in an age of advanced medicine and I have good health insurance coverage, that my body overall is in good shape, and I have many friends who care about me - so in other ways, I am very rich - and I am thankful for my life and my music!" This is sort of a reminder that life is fragile, and anything can happen at any time - and change is inevitable. We are all volunteers in the IMSA, and are fortunate to be able to share in our love of music and the musical saw! Thank YOU for being part of our wonderful community!!!

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

www.sawplayers.org

94952 U.S.A.

110 Prospect St., Petaluma, CA

IMSA,



Application for Membership to the International Musical Saw Association

Annual Membership Fees (in U.S. Dollars only) 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, 110 Prospect St., Petaluma, CA 94952 U.S.A.

**Membership payments can now be paid by "PayPal" at: www.sawplayers.org/form.html*

You can pay in your local currency or by credit card!



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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.

Please check the box or boxes that best represents your privacy preferences:

- I do not wish to share any of my contact information
- It is all right to give out my name and telephone number only
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- It is all right to give out my name and address only
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