

OUR PREZ SEZ

BILL LOWREY

Well, January was a quiet month for the band, but I had the opportunity to compile the payout figures for 2015, and our efforts were impressive. According to our billings, we played thirty-nine payouts last year and had payout revenues of \$11,700. This represents a lot of hard work by everyone. Thanks for all you do to make the band's payout efforts a success.



Of course, payout attendance and success has been an occasional topic of the board. We worry that our model of accepting payouts without confirming participation may bite us. We've enjoyed the luxury of accepting the performance and then asking for volunteers. We hope that this will continue to work for us and thank you for your efforts to support the band and our booking agent.

I want to thank those who have taken the time to respond to the questionnaire that I sent via email some time ago. As I mentioned then, I've not come to this job with a predetermined agenda. Frankly, I think the band does a great job and since each of us volunteers to the level of our abilities, I'm not sure that there is a lot more to squeeze out of us. But, the responses are consistent and worth looking into. The most common thing mentioned is a desire for the band to regain a certain level of musicianship and to revisit songs we've not played in a while. I was reminded of how much I miss the opportunity we had at the pizza parlor to practice together, behind closed doors, to work on specific issues. I feel these sessions strengthened us. Of course, logistics have changed, and the doors are thing of the past, but I think looking at other practice options makes sense.

My thoughts are that it would be best on another night. Perhaps, somewhere private where we could really work without distraction. Well, this will take a bit more time to figure out, but in the meantime, we've decided to end early on the second and fourth Wednesdays and to immediately start a short, 15 minute practice session. This is less than ideal; but, it is worth trying. There will be no moving of chairs, no planned break...just a quick announcement and then a brief session to focus on a song or something else that Charlie or another director would like to address. I hope you'll support these sessions and offer feedback about a more viable solution moving forward.

Another respondent mentioned that we should once again

offer scholarships. I wondered, "When did we stop offering them?" Truth is, they are still available, but due to limited response and a couple misfires, we did stop publicizing them as part of our standard commercial time. Of course, the mechanism is still in place for someone to apply and receive a scholarship. We'll have to look at how to make that more public.

Speaking of public...for as long as I've been on the board, we've sometimes looked at performing a few gratis payouts for other non-profit organizations as a way of increasing our exposure and doing good in the community. We've always stopped short of creating a way of doing this, but at the recent board meeting, we voted to offer a free payout as part of a Ronald McDonald house event. I hope our offer is accepted and that we can continue to explore ways to give to those around us.

FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

CHRIS BRACHER

Hi Folks, this month I want to report on an interesting resource that I have re-discovered lately. It's a website called www.BanjoHangout.org and it's basically for all things banjo related. Now, you might automatically assume that it's mostly full of 5-string folks and discussions about bluegrass music, of which there is some of that, but there are also more than enough people interested in our kind of music and banjos...!



I first discovered the website a few years ago when Bill Lowrey told me that he visited it. I checked it out, but did not spend much time on it and lost track of it. Recently I have begun to participate in the forums as well as post photos of my banjos and instrument

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accessories. I knew that I have some nice banjos, but I'm finding out just how rare some of my collection truly is.

That said, there are ongoing discussions about vintage and new instruments along with how to play certain songs and various playing methods and fingering techniques. There are also a lot of links to quite a few YouTube videos with members demonstrating various things or just playing a song and also to Ebay auctions with interesting parts or instruments.

I'd have to say that there are few banjo related questions that you can't get an answer to with some exploring or online conversation with the site's members. By the way, Charlie and the Peninsula Banjo Band are mentioned every so often on the site. Our reputation really knows no limits or boundaries.

I encourage everyone to visit and explore the site. It's a good way to virtually meet other banjo players and learn how to become a better player.

On January 13, we had hoped that Kitty Wilson would visit to play a few numbers with us. But her health just would not permit and she had to cancel.

So we dedicated the evening to her. Don Brayton sang *Hello Kitty*, and for our second to the last number we played *Coney Island Washboard* and when the washboard solos on the second chorus were called for – no one played. The silence was a tribute to our friend.

And many thanks to all who played that night. Your timing on the silent breaks was perfect and the effect was memorable.

Personal Notes

These items come from you. Please let us know of happenings in your life or our community.

In 1977, Mary Fiedler had her first gutbucket lesson, after brother Michael's banjo lesson. Charlie taught her and her first homework was to work on *Alley Cat*, *Brahams Hungarian Dance #5* and *Dueling Banjos*. Yep, that was 39 years ago this month.

February and March Birthdays

- Elizabeth Thomas 02/09
- Don Brayton 02/11
- Ed Bellerive 02/11
- Carole Thum 02/28
- Jean Avram 02/28
- Beverlee Kuhar 03/12
- Gordon Ashby 03/20
- Janice Oldenburg 03/27
- Helen Mattson 03/27

In Memoriam



Georgette Twain Sieff, "Queen of the Banjo"
1925 - 2016

Georgette Twain Sieff passed away in Reno, Nevada on January 4, 2016 at the age of 90 with her daughter at her side.

Her parents were both stage actors and musicians with her mother also being a dancer. They lived in New York City but later moved to El Cerrito, California. Georgette married Dr. Samuel Twain in 1949. Together, they had a daughter, Cecilia, who was born the next year.

Georgette loved to sing and had a beautiful singing voice. She was studying to be an opera singer when she was stricken with bulbar polio which took away even her speaking voice.

Since she no longer could sing, her father taught her the plectrum banjo. One day, she met the "King of the Banjo," Eddie Peabody who gave her lessons and was her mentor. It was then that Georgette Twain became "Queen of the Banjo."

Georgette was inducted into the National Four-String Banjo Hall of Fame. She had been a member of the East Bay Banjo Club, and was a Sacramento Banjo Band honorary life time member. In lieu of flowers, one may make a donation in Georgette Twain's name to the American Banjo Museum, 9 E. Sheridan Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104.

Auxiliary Notes

DICK NEBEL

The Auxiliary did not meet formally in January and at present, there is no meeting planned for February.

January Mailing: Bev Kuhar, Janice Oldenburg, and Dick Nebel met with Phyllis Heeter at her home to complete the stuffing and sealing of approximately 600 envelopes.

Phyllis and Rene Avigdor had previously addressed and stamped all the envelopes. Thanks to all.

ABOUT OUR MUSIC

JIM STRICKLAND

Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay

Buffalo Bob: "Say Kids, what time is it?"

Peanut Gallery: "It's Howdy Doody Time!"

Forty kids in the "Peanut Gallery" sing:

It's Howdy Doody time
It's Howdy Doody time
Bob Smith and Howdy too
Say "Howdy do" to you
Let's give a rousing cheer
'Cause Howdy Doody's here
It's time to start the show
So kids, let's go!



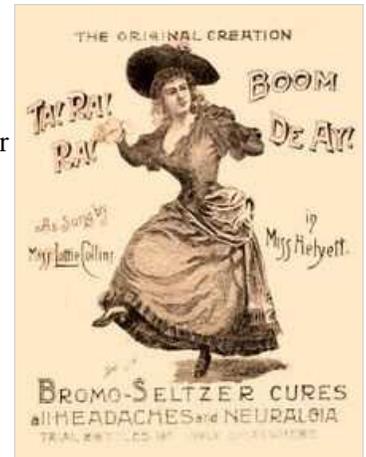
That's our latest "new" song – fun and rollicking – the theme for Howdy Doody the 1950's puppet who lived in Doodyville with Buffalo Bob Smith, Clarabell the horn honking, seltzer squirting clown and a host of puppet and human characters– a show that many of us grew up with. Remember Princess Summerfallwinterspring, the puppet who became a human, and a very pretty human at that.

But of course, it's also "*Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay*"– a fun, rollicking song from the 1890's.

It was sung first in public in an 1891 minstrel/variety show called "Tuxedo" and the show's author, Henry Sayers is often credited as the song's composer. But Sayers said he heard a bawdy version of the tune in a St. Louis brothel in the 1880's. He cleaned up the lyrics to naughty from bawdy (for its time) and copyrighted it in 1890.

Lottie Collins was a British singer and her husband, Stephen Cooney, heard the song in "Tuxedo" and purchased the rights from Sayers for Collins to perform the song in England. Collins worked up a dance routine around it, and, with new words and a new arrangement, she first sang the song at the Tivoli Music Hall on The Strand in London in 1891 to an enthusiastic reception. It became her signature tune. According to reviews at the time, Collins delivered the suggestive verses (See Box.) with deceptive demureness, before launching into the lusty refrain and her celebrated "kick dance," a kind of cancan in which, according to one reviewer, "she turns, twists, contorts, revolutionizes, and disports her lithe and muscular figure into a hundred different poses, all bizarre."

And here is a Bromo Seltzer ad from the period. After taking a Bromo you were ready to sing, "*Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay*."



Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay

As sung by Lottie Collins

A sweet tuxedo girl you see
A queen of swell society
Fond of fun as fond can be
When it's on the strict Q.T.
I'm not too young, I'm not too old
Not too timid, not too bold
Just the kind you'd like to hold
Just the kind for sport I'm told

Chorus: *Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay!* (sung eight times)

I'm a blushing bud of innocence
Papa says at big expense
Old maids say I have no sense
Boys declare, I'm just immense
Before my song I do conclude
I want it strictly understood
Though fond of fun, I'm never rude
Though not too bad I'm not too good

Chorus

A sweet tuxedo girl you see
A queen of swell society
Fond of fun as fond can be
When it's on the strict Q.T.
I'm not too young, I'm not too old
Not too timid, not too bold
Just the kind you'd like to hold
Just the kind for sport I'm told

Chorus

Announcements

- Next Board Meeting – Monday March 7, 2016, at 1598 Koch Lane, San Jose
- Next Auxiliary Meeting – No meeting planned at present
- Please respond to Bill Lowrey's questionnaire which was sent to you by email. If you need another copy, please email Bill at vegavox@gmail.com

PBB Calendar – Playouts and Other PBB Events

(Non-Playouts are shown in italics.)

Date	Day	Event	Location	Time
Feb. 9	Tues.	The Forum (Medical Bldg.)	Cupertino	3:30 – 4:30 PM
Feb. 12	Fri.	American Legion	Santa Clara	7:00- 8:00 PM
April 23	Sat.	Life's Garden	Sunnyvale	5:00 – 6:00 PM
May 12-15		BanjoRama	Sacramento	Tbd
May 16	Mon.	Villa Montalvo	Saratoga	11:00 AM – 12:00
May 30	Mon.	Oak Hill Cemetary	San Jose	12:15 – 1:15 PM
July 4	Mon.	The Sequoias	Portola Valley	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Aug. 13	Sat.	Milpond Mobile Home Cmty.	San Jose	7:00 – 8:00 PM
Sept. 5	Mon.	The Atrium	San Jose	2:00 – 3:00 PM
Nov. 11	Fri.	The Atrium	San Jose	2:30 – 3:30 PM

PBB Board Meetings are the first Monday of the month.

2016 Playout Attendance

Chris Bracher

Dec 1, 2015 – Jan 31, 2015

Playouts for the year: 2

Members who have played: 16

AVRAM, JEAN	1
FAITH, TOM	1
GOLDSTEIN, JOAN	2
HORNE, MARY	1
KRAKAR, JOHN	1
LATHROP, JIM	2
LOPES, HOWARD	1
LUNDGREN, BILL	2
MCLAUGHLIN, LEE	2
McMORROW, CLYDE	1
MIN, JIMMIE	2
MOROCCO, SAM	2
OKERLUND, ARLENE	1
STRICKLAND, JIM	2
TAGAWA, CHARLIE	2
TRANBERG, CLIFF	1