

A Kiwi First: Unique Collection *Squeezes* into Dargaville!

Dargaville, just 2½ hours north of Auckland and a short hop from the largest Kauri Tree and the longest drivable beach in New Zealand, has just inherited an International claim to fame... the Kumara capital now has more than 7,000 buttons and keys connected by hundreds upon hundreds of bellows pleats, as it hosts the only exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere of *ACCORDIONS!*

WHAT? "Accordion Gems by Kevin Friedrich, A Master Collection of Accordions through Time" will be the anchor display in the new Music Wing of the Dargaville Museum.

WHY? To pay tribute to the rich musical heritage of the area! Many are surprised to learn that Dargaville, a rural country town of some 4,000 people at the time, was once home to eight accordion orchestras/bands spread over four sizable accordion studios, in addition to the Dargaville Town Brass Band, the Dargaville Pipe Band, the Yugoslav Tamurica Orchestra and Dancers, Choirs, the Dargaville High School Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Band, Concert Band, as well as soloists such as Mark Williams and others who went on to excel in the music field.

Dargaville born Kevin Friedrich, an accordionist who has made his home in New York City for many years now, has worked over the last several years to bring his unique and exotic collection of accordions dating from the early 1800's back to his home town. Dargaville rallied behind this unusual undertaking, and with strong community spirit and support from Council and Museum officials, service clubs, residents and outside supporters, the fund raising efforts and volunteer work have managed to bring the dream of a Music Wing to house the accordions to fruition.

In regards to the accordion, New Zealand has done outstanding work over the years and even the national flag carrier sponsored the Air New Zealand Accordion Orchestra for many years! Highlights include producing a book on the History of the Accordion in New Zealand, commissioning new works for accordion from leading composers, inviting International Guest Artists from around the world to appear in concert and give Master Classes, sending young accordionists to the Coupe Mondiale World Accordion Championships, hosting the World Championships in 1980, and now bringing this, the largest of International accordion competitions to New Zealand shores again 2009. As a compliment to this important work, the valuable and historical collection "Accordion Gems" will profile the colorful history of the accordion for all to see.

SQUEEZABLE TREASURES? Yes indeed! The display features over 100 beautiful instruments dating back to the early 1830's, and from there, the collection highlights accordion evolution throughout the years. You'll see more buttons, keys, bellows and rhinestones in various shapes, colors and sizes than you could possibly imagine! In addition, there are historical original accordion manuscripts, accordion magazines and even 300 ceramic accordion dolls!

WHEN? Opening is October 21st, 2007 at 1:00 PM. The display was dedicated last December at the conclusion of a sold out fundraising concert in the Dargaville Town Hall. Since then, the instruments have been in storage, patiently awaiting their new home. Now at last, at this Grand Opening, music will fill the Kaipara air, bellows will be squeezed, keys and buttons pushed and feet will tap as the instruments are brought back to life and welcomed to their new home.

WHERE? This spectacular visual panorama of buttons and keys awaits you at the Dargaville Museum located on Mt. Wesley in Harding Park on the south end of Dargaville. Located by the site of an old Maori pa, Po-tu-Oterangi, the Museum grounds offer magnificent views of Dargaville, Toka Toka, Maungaraho, the Tangihua Mountain Ranges and the historic Northern Wairoa River.

NEED TO CONTACT SOMEONE? If you would like VIP seating, more information, advance plans for the world's first 'Kauri' accordion, priority access to photograph the instruments, a quiet moment to try pushing some buttons yourself, someone to talk to, or if you just have to see it to believe it... we can SQUEEZE you in to this 'unique' Kiwi odyssey! Please contact:

Pene McKenzie: Dargaville Museum

Phone: 09 439-7555 E-mail: darg.museum@xtra.co.nz

Kevin Friedrich: (in Dargaville from October 11 – 29, 2007)

Phone: 09 439-6117 E-mail: kevinfriedrich@hotmail.com Internet: www.accordions.com/kevin/museum.htm

A warm *Northland Welcome* awaits you!

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New Zealand Accordion Fun Facts at a Glance:

- A New Zealander is President of the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA), (founded in 1935 and member of the International Music Council - IMC-UNESCO) the only non-European President ever, and only the 3rd newly elected President in more than 40 years.
- The largest Internet site for accordion in the world www.accordions.com is founded and run by a New Zealander.
- A young New Zealander is studying accordion in Paris, France and after missing the world title this year by less than .5 of a mark, he is vying to become the new World Accordion Champion next year.
- A New Zealander is studying accordion in Kiev, Ukraine.
- A New Zealander graduated with an Accordion Performance Degree from the University of Missouri in Kansas City, Conservatory of Music.
- A New Zealand accordionist performed on TV and to tens of thousands live with USA based Celtic Rock Band "The Elders."
- New Zealand's most prolific composer for accordion is Gary Daverne, conductor of the Auckland Symphony Orchestra.
- A New Zealand accordionist was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Scholar Award.
- The accordion was the official instrument of the Maori Battalion.
- Former Prime Minister Rob Muldoon attended the World Accordion Championships in New Zealand in 1980.
- The accordion is now accepted for study at Auckland University Conservatory of Music.
- A New Zealander organized the International Accordion Archive Center housed in Ikaalinen, Finland.
- Air New Zealand sponsored the Air New Zealand Accordion Orchestra in several overseas concert tours.
- The Air New Zealand Accordion Orchestra was a Sport & Cultural Ambassador for New Zealand Trade & Tourism in 1990.
- In 1990 a New Zealander received the Commemoration Medal in recognition of Services to New Zealand along with a certificate signed by the Governor General, the Prime Minister and the Queen.
- A New Zealand accordionist was created a Fellow of the Institute of Registered Music.
- A New Zealander broke the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest non-stop accordion playing.
- New Zealand soloists have performed accordion concertos with major Symphony and Accordion Orchestras around the world more than 150 times, including performances in Europe, North America, Australasia, China and Turkey.
- Many New Zealand Accordionists are Registered Music Teachers (IRMT).
- New Zealand is hosting the Coupe Mondiale World Accordion Championships in the Bruce Mason Center (Takapuna, Auckland) in August of 2009.
- Each year dozens of accordions are imported into New Zealand from Italy with top models lightening your bank account by more than \$25,000.00!
- The curator of the famous Whittaker's Museum on Waiheke Island is an accordionist.
- The only accordion Museum exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere is in DARGAVILLE!