

TAPE INDEX

Art Moilanen
Waino Salo
Moilanen home, Mass City Michigan

Interviewed by J. P. Leary
August 17, 1989
MTAP Apprenticeship

Tape One, Side One

1. Technical considerations of teaching. On the necessity of avoiding wrong fingering techniques. On playing by hear (by notes is a "long winded affair). On the use of tapes following a session to refresh Wayne's memory. On the progress W is showing: "it's going along pretty good."
2. On the nature of Finnish music and Art's personal approach to it. "Some people just murder the Finnish music . . . it always seems to be a little different when a Finnlander plays it."
3. Waino comes up with a song Art hasn't recalled in years, and Art has dug up a few older Finnish tunes he hasn't played in a long time.
4. Announcement.
5. Waino demonstrates some mistakes he was making on the bass and treble sides of the accordion. He follows the mistakes with the proper techniques learned from Art.
6. W learned of Art by seeing him in Michael Loukinen's film, asking Fred Waisanen about Art, eventually calling him on the phone, then meeting him. W's older brother had a piano accordion and the family had old 78 records. Art sent W a tape of Finnish music to recall the old tunes.
7. Viola Turpeinen has been W's idol. He saw her play at the dance hall in Eben while growing up. Wants to preserve Finnish music into succeeding generations.
8. W born Eben Junction, west of Munising, in 1928. Went to MSU, studied vocational agriculture. Has been in farm equipment sales for thirty years.
9. About W's experience with music while growing up. Youngest sister played piano. W didn't really pursue music until 1986 except with "one or two fingers." Had an accordion in the closet for 15 years.
10. Art born in Mass City area, Wasa Siding, on the farm. Oldest brother's partner killed in a mining accident, brother bought the accordion. Art started fooling around as a kid, taught himself to read music in high school. Enjoyed seeing Viola Turpeinen come through and play every summer. "A lesson for me to see and listen to her perform." Has striven to play like her ever since.
11. Art has always enjoyed teaching, has had lots of students over the years. Has had several good students over the years and wants to continue to teach Finnish music. Art has never gone looking for students, rather they have come to him. Is now teaching a retired automotive engineer from Michigan Tech.

12. W feels very fortunate to have A as his teacher. Wants to keep on learning to play into the future.
13. A reckons ear players can be tremendous if their ear is good; others can't pick up anything or play anything without looking at the sheet music. Waino has a good ear for music and is easy to teach.
14. W stresses that A insisted he practice a minimum of two hours every night in order to improve.

[From here on Art and Waino illustrate what they do during a typical lesson.]

15. W illustrates what he was doing wrong with "Life in the Finnish Woods," and A offers tips. W plays the tune with A offering a second part. He goofs up a little because he is listening to A.
16. "Life in the Finnish Woods," take two.
17. W plays "Kulkurin Valssi."
18. W plays a polka, can't recall the name--one heard from a Swedish band some years ago; then he bought their tape.
19. Warm up is particularly important for getting your fingers limber.
20. W plays "Jalas Jarven Polkka."
21. A plays "Karjolan Pojat," then W plays it in a different key. He slides over some of the tricky parts but maintains the shape and rhythm of the tune pretty well.
22. W says A suggests watching your keyboard when you're learning a song and working a tricky new passage.
23. A likes to end his songs with a little life and punch, with lots of staccato--especially important in polkas. W illustrates how he's been working on the staccato part.
24. A has suggested that W tape his music and listen to himself on cassette in the car. That way he can critique himself and work on his mistakes.
25. W does a schottische. A thinks its timing is very good and stresses this.
26. Important that the left hand, bass side, chording be automatic so that the right hand side can be concentrated on.
27. W tries to play "Unelma Valssi" that he heard Viola Turpeinen do as a kid. The tape runs out.

[Side Two blank, End of Session]