

Joan Sommers



Joan Conducting the CIA World Accordion Orchestra

Joan Cochran Sommers has held many positions within the ATG and some of them more than once. It was Anthony Galla-Rini who encouraged her to be active in the organization, just as she as tried to encourage her own students as well. As a teacher, beginning at the age of 14, the large accordion orchestras under Joan's direction won more 1st place awards than any other Virtuoso group during a time when there could be over 25 orchestras competing in the class. Her students also won a great many solo trophies and several also earned the right to represent the USA (both AAA and ATG) in many different CIA Coupe Mondiale competitions, just as she did in 1955 and 1956. She began teaching at the age of 14 and now, at the age of 83, still finds the accordion, whether as a solo instrument or in groups of any size, exciting and full of great promise for the future. Joan hopes to continue to arrange for and conduct orchestras, present workshops and master classes, as well as serve as a coach for accordion soloists. She was awarded the title of Professor Emerita by the University of Missouri upon her retirement from serving as a full-time Professor and Assistant Dean in the Conservatory of Music in 2000.