

## AROUND THE OFFICE

The Scott Joplin Foundation has survived the worst winter we've seen in a long time. Snow and ice started in late November with a real nasty streak from mid Jan until late February. While it was nothing like the Northeast or the northern part of the Midwest, it made us Missourian remember what winter was actually supposed to be like. As March brings about warmer weather, and hopefully not a repeat of last year's spring tornadoes, the Festival plans are well underway.

The Foundation Office and Store will be working on spring hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm (Central Time). There are times when we close for meetings and there are times we are open for special events or large groups. But typically, every week day from now until the Festival.

We had two successful Benefit Concerts featuring Mimi Blais in October and Anne and Jeff Barnhart with special guest Danny Coats in January. Everyone seemed to have a real good time.

The Online Store is still doing very well. We are still trying to make it more user friendly. It seems they keep changing things on us! New items have been added to the store inventory and the 2007 Festival souvenirs have been ordered. They should be in stock any day now.

We are trying something a little different in cyber world. The Foundation has joined the MySpace generation! We have our own space – Scott Joplin Foundation. On that we have Festival information, performer list, and links to other related people and sites. This was just started in February, so we are unsure at this time what all might happen!

Tickets and information for the Festival are available at the store, online at [www.scottjoplin.org](http://www.scottjoplin.org) or by calling 660-826-2271 or 866-218-6258 (toll free). We look forward to seeing many of you at the 2007 Ragtime Festival!

## IT'S OUR BIRTHDAY???

For many years there have been considerable discussions on how many years the Festival has been around. When was the Foundation founded? What Festival number is this year? Things such as this. It seems we finally have an answer! In 1960 there was a 'Festival' during the Sedalia centennially celebration. That makes 1. In 1974 and 1975 there were Festivals each year in the summer. That makes 3 total. These are the early years of the Festival's life.

In the summer of 1982, the Foundation first filed with the State of Missouri for the organization that is currently in operation. That would make this the Foundation's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. However, there was not a Festival that year! In 1983, the Foundation received the non-profit status of 501(c)(3) and the Festival made a return to Sedalia with the issue of the Scott Joplin U.S. postage stamp. That began the first of the 24 consecutive Festivals that have been held to date.

So we are celebrating our 27 Festival in 2007. But we have a feeling the next year may be a big one – 25 consecutive years and 25 years operating as a non-for-profit. Now that will be something to celebrate!

## DREAM A LITTLE DREAM

It's always been there. In the back of the minds of the Foundation members and the Sedalia community. There were items donated that spent many years in storage or in the Archives at the college. All waiting. Waiting for the right time to come along. It seems as though now is the right time. A Scott Joplin Ragtime Museum and Complex are actually on the horizon.

Last summer, the State of Missouri initiated a program called the D·R·E·A·M Initiative. The goal of the D·R·E·A·M Initiative is to help several select Missouri communities:

- re-establish the properties in use in the downtown core,
- increase property tax values and sales tax opportunities,
- re-establish a sense of place and cultural heritage in the heart of the community, and
- attract private investment and new jobs.

Communities will be designated for a three year period and Sedalia is one of the first to receive this distinction. For the Foundation, and downtown Sedalia, this is very exciting.

Since the official designation in October 2006, the Sedalia Downtown Development, Inc (SDDI) group has taken ownership of the Uptown Theater. This is an old movie theater just a couple of blocks from the current office and store. The ultimate dream is to have this theater renovated and turned into a Scott Joplin Complex – office, store, museum, and performance theater.

The current particulars are still up in the air. As stated, SDDI has current ownership and is working to obtain grants, NAP credits, and other legal paperwork type issues. A best guess timeframe is 2 +/- years once everything is lined up. Upon renovation completion, the Foundation plans to become tenants of the building.

It is the hope of SDDI that during the 2007 Festival, the building will be at a point where tours could be given to those interested. There should also be a few preliminary design and layout sketches at that time. It is a very exciting time for Sedalia and the Scott Joplin Foundation.