

2008 Festival Preview

This year we will truly be able to call the Scott Joplin Festival International! England is providing us with two performers, Neville Dickie and Phillip Dyson; and we'll have Kjell Waltman from Sweden, and the Royal Guitars, Jan Thomsen and Torsten Ratzkowski from Denmark and Germany.

You'll also recognize some familiar faces that we haven't seen in a few years: Mike Schwimmer, formerly with the Elite Syncopators, Terry Waldo, Eubie Blake protege, and the Sunflower Orchestra under the direction of Steve Smith. Glenn Jenks is returning with a new CD in hand, and he has also agreed to teach this year's Master Class. Also, we're hoping that Adam Yarian will be able to make it.

First time performers will include Faye Ballard, who placed second in the 2007 Old Time Piano Playing Competition in Peoria, Illinois; John Partridge, a composer and performer from San Francisco, and Max Keenlyside, a young player from Prince Edward Island, Canada, who loves the folk rags and plays them well.

A few first-timers from last year have also agreed to return: Martin Spitznagel and Richard Dowling. Ivory and Gold, last year's Artists-in-Residence will also be here: for those of you who might not know, this group is Jeff and Ann Barnhart with drummer Danny Coots.

Concerts? The first concert will be a fun-filled romp across the USA on Bob Darch's famous "Ragtime Trail": rumor has it, that Bob's still traveling that highway. Wednesday night's concert will feature Classic Ragtime, and Thursday's festivities will include selections from Scott Joplin's opera, "Treemonisha", and the Ragtime Rebels from University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a five-piece marimba band that will delight everyone.

Seminars this year will feature Neville Dickie in a Tribute to the Stride Greats, Judy and Sharon Moore, on the Music of Donald Ashwander, Bill Edwards on Music for Silent Movies, Howard Vigorita on Ragtime Recording, and Terry Waldo, on Eubie Blake.

And don't forget all of the usual suspects: Mimi Blais, Brian Holland, Dave Majchrzak, Dave Tucker, John Petley, Steve Standiford, Jim Radloff, Don Ryan, Susan Cordell, Adam Swanson, Morgan Siever, and Wesley Reznicek.

I'm looking forward to another stellar year, when we'll be celebrating the 25th year of the Scott Joplin Foundation. Here's to another 25!!

Sue Keller, Artistic Director