

Festival Preview, 2009 ~ By Sue Keller

After a very successful festival in 2008, the board, Stacy and I are once again looking forward to an exciting lineup of performers for the 2009 festival. Included will be some that you haven't seen for a while: John De Chiaro, Terry Parrish (formerly with the Elite Syncopators), Paul Asaro, and the Tichenor family. And I have spoken with Kjell Waltman, who will do his darndest to clear his slate so that he will be able to play for us in 2009!

And there will be new faces, too. Alan Jaffe, a ragtime guitarist from New York City, and Frederick Hodges, a pianist well-known to West Coast audiences, as well as Richard Egan, who will be joining us from the St. Louis ragtime contingent.

The Wednesday Kickoff Concert is entitled, "The Ragtime Eatin' Place", so you'll all be able to skip lunch that day! We'll be serving up some hot dishes for your enjoyment, everything from soup to nuts. And don't forget the "Old Vienna Rolls." Mark and Nora Hulse, Dave Majchrzak, Jim Radloff, and yours truly will be involved in that one. Oh, yes, and you can expect some surprises, as well.

Our Classic Ragtime evening was so well-received last year that we have decided to repeat it, on Wednesday night at the Entertainer Concert. Each of the Wednesday concerts will be held at the State Fair Community College Stauffacher Theater. As you know, this venue is slightly smaller than the Liberty Center, so we urge you to purchase your tickets in advance.

The schedule has been rearranged just a bit: all of the afternoon concerts will be held at the United Methodist Church, which has been home to our seminar presenters for many years. The Thursday afternoon concert will be the "Ragtime Revelations" concert, which will include new performers, and new music. I like to feature young performers on this concert, as well.

Thursday night's concert is the Easy Winners Concert. Here, we'll be featuring Frederick Hodges, Paul Asaro, and Terry Parrish, and one or two others. This concert will be held at the Community College.

Friday also brings some changes, as well. The afternoon concert is Pleasant Moments – an afternoon with the women. Tentatively scheduled are Virginia Tichenor, Nora Hulse, Morgan Siever, and Faye Ballard.

This year, we will not only hold the dance on Friday, but we will also have a concert, for those of you who either can't dance or prefer not to. The "Cradle of Ragtime" concert, formerly on Thursday afternoon, will be held this evening. This concert will also be at the Community College. And I'm happy to announce that the Tichenor family will be featured on Friday night, as well as Max Keenlyside, our young player from Prince Edward Island, Canada, who made his first appearance at the festival in 2008. And, as most of you know, when you get the Tichenors, you also get three tremendously talented solo performers: Trebor Tichenor and his daughter, Virginia, and Marty Eggers, who was fortunate enough to have married into this family! And Andy Tichenor rounds out the quartet on trumpet in a most spectacular manner. Richard Egan will be hosting as well as playing in this one.

Rod and Trish Biensen will once again be returning to lead the dancers, and the Sunflower Orchestra under the baton of Steve Smith will once again be delighting you with their syncopated stylings.

Saturday's schedule begins with the fashion contest, parade, and award ceremony in the morning, and the Legacy of Scott Joplin concert in the afternoon. This will be held at the United Methodist Church, and features the music of the King of Ragtime. Joplin wrote six rags in 1909: Paragon, Euphonic Sounds, Solace, Wall Street Rag, Country Club, and our theme rag, Pleasant Moments. The finale will feature that tune. Also, on Saturday, we will be holding our Master Class with a Master to be named later! And as traditional, the Music Hall will be full of hi-jinx and surprises.

"Musically Yours", which features our performers playing non-ragtime music, will be at the Gazebo again this year, and include Kjell Waltman, Jeff Barnhart, Paul Asaro, myself, Frederick Hodges and one more to be named later. This is a very popular event, which was the brainstorm of Bill Long, my much-missed colleague.

I hope that the rising gas prices won't keep you away from what promises to be yet another wonderful ragtime experience in Sedalia. Please join us in 2009!

Sue Keller, Artistic Director