

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

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CONTEST AND FESTIVAL



MEMORIAL DAY OXFORD MISSISSIPPI

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the 51st edition of the Old-Time Piano Playing Contest! This event has undergone several venue moves during its long history before ending up here in Oxford. If you would like to become a patron of this event, please speak with me during the weekend or contact me via the contest e-mail. There is also information in the program on how you may donate online. I hope you have a thoroughly enjoyable time while you are here. What makes this event unique is the element of friendly competition for pianists of all ages. The inclusion of a variety of musical genres such as ragtime, traditional jazz, novelty song, honky-tonk, boogie and blues allows for a wide variety of musical selections.

Having celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Contest last year, we look forward to continuing the tradition of highlighting and preserving this uniquely American music from the early twentieth century. This year's guest artists / judges include Steinway artist Richard Dowling, no stranger to classical or ragtime audiences; Sue Keller, director of the Cape Cod Ragtime Festival and long-time supporter of the Contest; and Paul Orsi, our most recent three-time champion. Total prize money for this year is \$7,000 plus trophies & medallions for those who place in each division.

Take in the hospitality and southern charm that abounds in our community. If you need anything, just ask! Please fill out one of our survey forms in the Nutt Auditorium foyer so we know what you liked and what improvements we might consider for the future. We would also like to know how you found out about our event so we can better focus our advertising in the future. We want you to have a relaxing and fun experience and we want you to come back.



All of our after-hours events will be held indoors each evening at The Old Henry located at 1002 East Jackson Ave. on the Oxford Square. Originally a two-story hotel, The Old Henry is now a dueling piano bar, one of only two in the mid-south region. Full menu and bar service will be available each evening as well as some great music from our guest artists and competitors. Cover charge is \$10. Any catered event with live entertainment may be purchased as long as seats remain available. Grab some friends and come out for a relaxing and fun time!

Sit back and thoroughly enjoy some oldtime piano playing from a group of diverse performers ... tell your friends about it ... and bring them back with you next year!

Ian Hominick, Artistic Director



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HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL

As a fundraiser on Memorial Day in 1975, the Monticello Railway Museum hosted the first of twelve World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest editions that took place in that small town, located about halfway between Champaign and Decatur, Illinois. For eleven of those years, the contest took place on the rear platform of an old railroad caboose to the delight of hundreds of folks in lawn chairs, more in bleachers, and even some perched atop box cars to get a better view. The last year it took place in Monticello was the same day as "Hands Across America" and lots of folks suspected there'd be traffic problems and stayed away. Others were deterred by a chill breeze and cloudy skies with sprinkles of rain as the wind swept over the high school football field, pressed into service in anticipation of bigger crowds. Consequently, 1986 was the year we decided to take our event, which had expanded to two days with afterglow parties, inside.

By 1987, we were ensconced in the Holiday Inn on the west side of Decatur IL, and our stay there lasted until our move to Peoria in the late 1990s. We spent two years with the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel after a long stretch at the Hotel Père Marquette, which closed for renovation. When the Four Points suddenly closed, the Peoria Convention and Visitor's Bureau came to our rescue and we moved to the Embassy Suites for a few years.

Our first contestant showed up on a day in 1975 that was hot and sweaty and that would eventually be plagued by tornadoes nearby, forcing the contest into a baggage car with a back-up piano. Four contestants showed up but so did about 40 spectators. By year two, we were down to three contestants but had a much bigger audience and the third year, about 600 people came to watch, boosted by our champ's appearance on the *Mike Douglas Show* in Cleveland, Ohio.

After reading about her in a newspaper story in Chicago which was picked up by the wire services, the show flew her there for an appearance that also had Bob Hope and Jethro Tull's singer, Ian Anderson. She was thrilled, we were thrilled, and we wound up with a dozen contestants.







Joybelle Squibb, age 71, 1977





Dorothy M. Herrold, Laporte, Indiana

Our champ for the first two years was Joybelle Squibb, a golf-playing granny from Vandalia IL, but in 1977, Dorothy M. Herrold of LaPorte IN, a retired school teacher who got into playing full-time after her husband died, beat her. Herrold won three times in a row through 1979, our first of several three-time winners.

Through the years, the contest expanded from a one-afternoon affair where everybody picked up their lawn chair when the last tune was played and went to take a train ride. The first addition was a party afterward, the first one held at Shakey's Pizza Parlor in Champaign. Everybody spent the next five hours eating, drinking, and singing along with the piano players. Having the event at a hotel solved the problem of lodging for those coming in for both days and also gave us rooms for the afterparties with food service thrown in.

Since 2016, things changed with the contest and all of its events moved from Illinois to Mississippi. Instead of a hotel ballroom for our event, we use a concert hall that's part of the University of Mississippi Department of Music. We hope it was enough fun that you come back next year!

Ted Lemen, Founder



Ted Lemen entertains from the platform of a caboose.



Contest organizers Judy Leschewski and Ted Lemen in the early days with champion Mimi Blais of Montreal



GUEST ARTISTS AND JUDGES



SUE KELLER

Sue began her ragtime obsession in 1974. Since then, she has treated audiences to her piano and vocal performances throughout the world. Her appearances have ranged from the grand opening of Faneuil Hall Marketplace in

Boston Harbor, to the fabled Mikado nightclub in Tokyo, across the continent of Australia, and even to the Great Wall of China.

Back in the USA, Sue has been recognized as one of the world's top ragtime pianists. She was the music director of the prestigious Scott Joplin Festival in Sedalia, Missouri for 7 years and a director and officer of the World Old-Time Piano Championship in Peoria, Illinois for 14 years. She still judges contests from time to time and appears as a major supporting cast member in the award-winning independent movie, *The Entertainers*.

Sue has been untiringly active in promoting the ragtime form. Her recording projects have employed a unique and exciting digital process. Her first project produced in this manner, <code>Kellerized</code>, released in 1992, included both contemporary and traditional ragtime, old-time, novelty, and stride piano pieces. Over the course of 14 CDs (and counting), Sue often mixes exciting vocals together with both traditional and unique repertoires. In recent history, a growing number of her live performances have been videotaped and she has become the most filmed performer of ragtime in You-Tube history promising to influence the genre for generations to come. Sue is currently working with Jeff and Anne Barnhart on a Max Morath compilation.

In addition to Ragtime & Stride Piano, Sue also specializes in early Blues, the Christmas genre, the music of Johnny Mercer and Laura Nyro. But there doesn't seem to be any end in sight. Sue is currently working with the Peregrine Theatre Ensemble in Provincetown, MA, as rehearsal pianist and band member for RENT and CARRIE. This

year's offering is THE FULL MONTY, and she has been cast as an irascible piano player.



RICHARD DOWLING

Hailed by The New York Times as an especially impressive fine pianist, Richard Dowling appears regularly across the United States in solo recitals, at chamber music and jazz/ragtime festivals, and as a guest soloist in concerto performances with orchestras. He has been acclaimed by audiences for his elegant and exciting style

of playing which earns him frequent return engagements. Career highlights include a sold-out New York orchestral debut at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, solo recitals at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall in New York, and a special award from the National Federation of Music Clubs recognizing his outstanding performances of American music. Mr. Dowling has presented solo recitals in the Far East, South America, Australia, Africa, and Europe. Works of Chopin, Ravel, Gershwin, Gottschalk and ragtime figure prominently in his repertoire.

Mr. Dowling has received performance reviews that praise him as "a master of creating beautiful sounds with impeccable control of colors and textures" and as "a musician with something to say, the skill to say it and the magnetic power to make you want to listen" and for giving "a superb recital that left the audience craving for more at the end." He is also a versatile recording artist with over a dozen CDs of classical, chamber, ragtime, jazz, and popular music. His most recent recordings include Music of Old New York, a CD containing songs and piano rags inspired by The Big Apple at the turn of the century, and Gershwin for Two Pianos, a collection featuring Rhapsody in Blue and other beloved Gershwin works with virtuoso pianist Frederick Hodges.

On April I, 2017 Mr. Dowling performed the complete piano works of the renowned American ragtime composer Scott Joplin in two historic sold-out recitals at Carnegie Hall, exactly 100 years to the day Joplin died in New York. He is the first pianist to perform the complete cycle of Joplin's 53 rags, marches, waltzes and cakewalks in public. Throughout 2017 & 2018 Mr. Dowling performed nearly 100 all-Joplin recitals nationwide in commemoration of the centennial of Joplin's death and the sesquicentennial of his birth. Rivermont Records released his Grammy-nominated

3-CD set, The Complete Piano Works of Scott Joplin. Veteran celebrity ragtime pianist Max Morath says "Richard Dowling's mastery of the Joplin rags invokes a tenderness that charms us and a technical command that inspires our admiration."

In addition to his career as a concert pianist, Dowling works as an editor for Ludwig/Masters Music Publications and Alfred Music Publishing for whom he has produced critical performing editions of piano and chamber works by Zez Confrey, Debussy, Fauré, Gershwin, Hummel, Mendelssohn, and Ravel (including Ravel's Piano Trio). In addition to his regular concert performances, Mr. Dowling enjoys performing as a member of the artist roster of The Piatigorsky Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing live classical music to audiences across America. Since 1994 he has performed nearly 1,300 recitals under its auspices both as a soloist and in collaboration with cellist Evan Drachman and other Piatigorsky Artists. Mr. Dowling resides in New York and is a Steinway Artist. He is represented by Parker Artists.



PAUL ORSI

Paul, a ragtime pianist and composer, brings a unique high-energy style to America's first popular music. From a young age, Paul has performed professionally in many venues, including Shakey's Pizza Parlors, Clearman's Northwood's Inn, and most notably, a IO-year engagement as the Disneyland Coke Corner pianist. A three-time

winner of the World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest, Paul has appeared in several California Ragtime Festivals: West Coast Ragtime Festival, The San Diego Jazz Festival, The Historic Sutter Creek Ragtime Festival and Ragfest in Orange County. He now resides with his wife, Sharon, in Surprise, Arizona.

Paul earned his Master's Degree in music composition from UC Riverside. His "street" education comes from personal interaction for over 40 years with many notable ragtime performers: Dick Zimmerman, Max Morath, "Eubie"

Blake, Sally Stanford, Rod Miller, Judy Carmichael, Johnny Hodges, Jim Omohundro, Jim Hession, Frederick Hodges, Tom Brier, Stephanie Trick, Paulo Alderighi, and Adam Swanson to name a few. Paul attributes much of his stylistic flair to these exceptionable musicians and honors their legacy through his playing.



ADAM SWANSON

Adam is one of the world's foremost pianists and historians of vintage American popular music, including ragtime, early jazz, the Great American Songbook, and more. Adam has been a featured performer

and lecturer at ragtime and jazz festivals across the United States and abroad, and he is the only four-time winner of the World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest. He made his New York debut in Carnegie Hall at the age of nineteen, where he performed with Michael Feinstein. Adam appeared alongside pianist John Arpin at the Bohem Ragtime and Jazz Festival in the Republic of Hungary, and he has also toured Switzerland and Australia. Adam has accompanied silent films at the prestigious Cinecon Classic Film Festival at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood and performed privately for Oscar-winning Disney/Hollywood composer Richard M. Sherman (Mary Poppins, etc.). At the age of twentyone, Adam performed a solo concert at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C.

Adam holds a bachelor's degree in classical piano and a master's in musicology from the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. He has been mentored by other ragtime artists including the famed Max Morath and legendary 1950s recording artist Johnny Maddox, who was one of Adam's greatest influences. Adam has recorded albums with noted musicians such as former rock star Ian Whitcomb, the Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra, and the Bar D Wranglers, a classic western band. Adam's recordings have been used on the CBC TV show Murdoch Mysteries. He lives in Durango, Colorado, where he frequently performs in the Diamond Belle Saloon at the Historic Strater Hotel. Listen to Adam's livestream virtual concerts on his Facebook page and YouTube channel.

2025 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, MAY 22nd	
7:00 pm Tune-Ups Party – The Old Henry	

FRIDAY, MAY 23rd		
9:00 am	Presentation: Paul Stewart, guest artist — David H. Nutt Auditorium The Piano Music of George Gershwin: The Creative Synthesis of Ragtime, Blues, Jazz and Classical	
10:30 am	Guided Trolley Tour of Oxford	
12:00 pm	Musical Luncheon with special guest Paul Orsi – The Old Henry	
2:00pm	Presentation: Paul Orsi, guest artist — David H. Nutt Auditorium The Top 10 Most Rquested Rags of All Time	
3:00pm	Presentation: Sue Keller, guest artist — David H. Nutt Auditorium Glenn Jenks: The Man and His Music	
6:00 pm	New Rag Contest hosted by Bill McNally – David H. Nutt Auditorium	
8:00 pm	After-Hours Party – The Old Henry	

	SATURDAY, MAY 24th
8:00 am	Contestant Draw for Playing Order
9:00 am	Preliminary Round for Junior, Regular & Senior Divisions – David H. Nutt Auditorium
11:45 am	Silent Movie Box Lunch with Adam Swanson – UM Band Hall
1:00 pm	Regular & Senior Division Preliminary Round continues
7:00 pm	Guest Artist Concert featuring Richard Dowling, Sue Keller, Paul Orsi, and Adam Swanson – David H. Nutt Auditorium
8:30 pm	After-Hours Party – The Old Henry

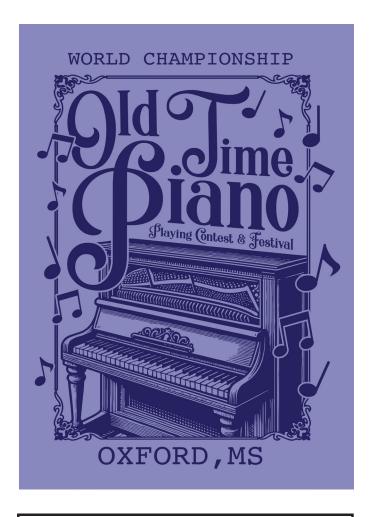
SUNDAY, MAY 25th			
9:00 am	Youth Master Class with Richard Dowling – David H. Nutt Auditorium		
10:55 am Gospel Rag Service with Paul Orsi & Sue Keller – St. Peter's Episcopal Church			
1:00 pm Semi-finals, Seniors Final & Finals – Nutt Auditorium			
7:00 pm	Red, White & Blue Finale — The Old Henry *Memorial Day Tribute — free admission for veterans		

*all-event & day passes do not include after-hours at The Old Henry – \$10 cover



2025 Contest T-Shirts, merchandise, and performer CD's available for sale in the hallway.

2025 FESTIVAL MERCHANDISE



Pick up an official
Contest T-shirt (right)
or an official contest cap,
tote, mug, or pen (below)
at the merchandise table
located in the hallway
outside Nutt Auditorium.

Concessions are available in the hallway outside
Nutt Auditorium.
*No food or drink permitted in Nutt Auditorium











CONTESTANT PROFILES



Faye Ballard is looking forward to defending her Senior Division title this year and also participating in the New Rag contest with a piece written for her by her teacher, Christos Tsitsaros. Faye has been in love with ragtime music since age

IO when she first listened to Les Cripe, the pianist for the Harry James band, play at a Shakey's Pizza Parlor in Decator, IL. Faye enjoys playing ragtime for her music club and for various nursing homes in Champaign, IL. She also enjoys passing on her love of the genre to her five students.



Tim Barton hails from the "windy city" Chicago, the home of the blues. Tim is playing in his third World Championship Old Time Piano Contest. Having won the Senior Division 2nd prize in both 2023 and 2020, he is happy to play

again! His solo piano show "Rhapsody in Chicago Blues" continues to be successful around the world at the Adelaide, Edinburgh, Finland and Estonia Fringes. Tim loves camping, travel, building websites and volunteer work.



John Beggs is from Madison Florida where he recently graduated from high school. John has been passionate about music from at least the age of two. He was blessed to have had several great teachers who encouraged him to use

his natural talent of listening, playing by ear, and improvising. Playing written music was an afterthought. More recently with his interest in classical music he has quickly become proficient with written music.

John has performed numerous piano concerts. He also plays for private parties, events, restaurants, and as an accompanist. He has performed in several musical

> theater productions. John will be attending Belmont University this fall where he will study classical piano performance. www.johnbeggs.us



Clara Bieler began playing piano at age five. Since then her enjoyment in playing has only grown, along with composing. Born in Switzerland, she currently lives in Maryland with her parents and 3 brothers. Her three red-headed brothers could

serve for inspiration for a new rag, but often interrupt piano practice. She studies under Russell Wilson, who encouraged her to enter this competition.



Luca Ciraldo is completing his freshman year at Oak Grove High School in Hattiesburg, MS. Ol' Daphers is his first composition to ever be performed live and is named after one of his beloved family pets, Daphne the Dog. Luca pursued some piano lessons

in elementary school and has recently started them again. He is in the a cappella ensemble at school as well as the American Sign Language Club. He is a Scout and loves hiking, engineering, and hopes to be a doctor someday.



Michael Drexler is an award-winning pianist and music producer with two Grammy nominations to his name. Born in Munich (Germany) Michael had his first piano lesson at age seven. As an eight-year old Michael was chosen for a TV

show as a singer and subsequently performed on television, radio and appeared on various recordings throughout Europe.

Michael fell in love with ragtime, blues, and jazz music after attending his first jam session at age twelve. He graduated from Berklee College of Music with a degree in jazz piano performance and finished his master's degree in music production & piano performance at the Hochschule für Musik Detmold (Germany). A few years ago, Michael rediscovered his love for ragtime and boogie-woogie and subsequently won medals here in Oxford, winning 5th place in 2016 and 3rd place in 2019. Michael currently performs at boogie-woogie and ragtime festivals in the USA and in Austria.





Michael Flores is 19-yearsold and has been playing piano since the young age of 5. He began his piano studies at Yamaha School of music which taught him traditional classical technique. He attended Yamaha until the age of 15 where his

teacher graduated him from the junior division having finished level 7 from the performance books. Michael Flores discovered ragtime while attending the San Diego Jazz Festival where he met current world champion Paul Orsi. Paul offered lessons and became his ragtime mentor where Michael began to learn the Scott Joplin repertoire as well as stride piano improvisation. Through Paul, Michael discovered the ragtime competition and decided to compete in 2023 landing 4th place in the youth division.

Since then Michael has participated in many ragtime and early jazz festivals including the Sutter Creek Ragtime festival and Teagarden Camp. While competing in the competition Michael was impressed by the beautiful campus of Ole Miss and decided to apply to the college during his senior year of high school, while visiting the college he met Dr. Hominick (the head professor of piano performance majors) who was incredibly supportive of Michael's decision to go to Ole Miss and solidified his commitment to the college. Michael is very excited to compete in the 2025 World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest.



Inventive stride, swing and blues pianist, **Jean-Baptiste Franc** created his own style by mixing melodic improvisation and stride. A self-taught musician, he was helped by his father, Olivier Franc, and his influences are Donald Lambert, James P.

Johnson, Fats Waller and Sidney Bechet. In 2001, he had the chance to play with Fats Waller's guitarist, Al Casey who nicknamed him "Little Fats".

Jean-Baptiste has received the support of such pianists as Monty Alexander and Junior Mance for his CD recorded with Count Basie's drummer, Duffy Jackson. With his father, the Olivier Franc's Tribute to Bechet Band played in such places as Dresden and

Frankfurt opera and Olympia Theatre in Paris in 2015 and Victoria Hall in Geneva in 2019. Further solo appearances have been at the Lucerne Piano Festival, La Roquebroue, Beaune, and Bal Blomet in Paris.



Justin Hack will be thirty-three at the time of the contest and has played the piano since he was seven. Justin was first exposed to ragtime via a performance of the Maple Leaf Rag at age seven and was obsessed with ragtime from that time forward. He graduated

with a BA in Film and Media Studies from Arizona State University in 2013, and later went back and received a BA in Music Composition from the same university in 2021. Justin fulfilled one of his life's dreams by attending the International Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival in Sedalia last summer and plans to be there this year, too. He is currently a teacher in Glendale, Arizona.



Alexander Hutchinson is currently a fourteen-yearold sophomore. He will be fifteen at the time of this year's competition. Like his brother, he is homeschooled. He began studying piano in 2015. Outside of school and piano, he likes to

learn random facts about absolutely everything.

Last year, Alex attended the Palmetto
International Piano Festival and the Czech Fine Arts
Camp for Youth in the Czech Republic, where he played
with the camp's jazz band. This summer, he will return
to the Czech Republic Fine Arts Camp, and will also
attend the Interlochen Arts Academy as a piano major.

Alex won third place in the Junior Division of the World Championship Old Time Piano Playing Contest in 2023. Other performances include a performance in the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles (2024) and a concerto performance as a festival finalist with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra in St. Petersburg, Russia (2019). He studies piano with Dr. Annie Jeng, Director of Keyboard Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



John Patrick Hutchinson, is a sixteen-year-old homeschooled junior, who began studying piano in 2014. He has performed solo repertoire at venues including Carnegie Hall in New York City and Beethoven's birthplace

in Bonn, Germany. Most recently, in February, he performed with the American Pops Orchestra at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery.

John Patrick currently serves as the full-time pianist and organist at First Methodist Church in Bennettsville, South Carolina, just across the state line from his hometown (Rockingham, North Carolina). He also collaborates with local competition choirs and performs with the Moore County Philharmonic Orchestra in North Carolina. He studies piano with Dr. Annie Jeng, Director of Keyboard Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



Janice Jurgenson is a Minnesotaborn composer. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education from Macalester College. Her music career has included time as a high school choir director, 45 years as her church choir director and over

60 years as a private lesson piano teacher. In her early 80's Janice began a focus on composing music, studying with her current teacher, David Kassler. She has enjoyed writing for a wide variety of instruments and voice and truly enjoys the gift of music.



Max Libertor was born and raised in the suburbs of Los Angeles California. One of 5 children, he showed a very early love for music. He had traditional piano lessons from a very early age, but stopped when he was twelve years old. During

the pandemic his love for music was reignited when he discovered Tom Brier's modernistic and difficult ragtime. He started teaching himself Brier's music. This "new ragtime hobby" lasted long after the

pandemic; in 2023, he was honored as the Ragtime Kid at the renowned Scott Joplin Festival in Sedalia, Missouri. Max has since performed at festivals such as the Sutter Creek Ragtime Festival and the West Coast Ragtime Festival. In 2024, he placed 3rd in the youth division of the World Championship Old Time Piano Playing Contest in 2024. Max is not only a performer, but also a composer, arranger, and multi-instrumentalist. He plays trumpet in the high school concert and jazz band, and explores many other instruments in his free time.



Paul Stewart has had a long time interest in piano Ragtime music. He has presented Ragtime concerts, workshops, lecture recitals and performances in a variety of venues throughout the U.S. and in Europe. Paul was a finalist in the 2022 World

Championship Old-Time Piano-Playing Contest at The University of Mississippi. He performed at the 2024 Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival's 50th Anniversary in Sedalia, Missouri. His ragtime CD is titled "Rhythm and Rags." His favorite mantra is, "You don't stop playing the piano because you get old. You get old because you stop playing the piano."



It is now three quarters of a century since Monty Suffern started playing piano, so he is well and truly part of the senior division of this year's Old Time Piano Playing Contest. He is mainly self-taught, plays by ear and has trouble sticking exactly

to a written score, but that is perhaps not a bad thing for playing old time music of the original ragtime era. Apart from his musical talents, Monty's past has seen him lecturing in Chemical Engineering for 30 plus years as his vocation (in Melbourne, Australia), and in the 1990s spear-heading a new degree program for pilots in Australia, from whence he originally hails. He also competed in motorsport as a rally navigator for many years in his younger days and then took up flying lessons to fill the excitement gaps in his life following retirement from his motorsport career. Weather permitting, he might well fly the Velocity airplane he built over a number of years to this event. His commitment to the notion of lifelong learning has seen him recently earn associate degrees in Song Writing and Audio Engineering from his local community college in Texas where he currently resides.



Jared Szabo, a Southern
California native, is a relative
newcomer to piano playing
and composing. He was first
introduced to ragtime in 2021
by way of his electronic keyboard
which had "The Entertainer"

as one of its sample songs. He has been enamored with the ragtime style ever since. In addition to playing rags, Jared also has been composing his own rags, which have received the attention of some prominent modernday ragtimers. Jared had the pleasure of attending the 2023 and 2024 Scott Joplin Ragtime Festivals, the 2024 Old-Time Piano Playing Contest as a New Rag Division Contestant, and the 2024 West Coast Ragtime Festival. These all furthered his love for this music genre and gave him opportunities to meet and play for other ragtime enthusiasts. Jared has performed at local events and gatherings, and currently performs at the Rose Leaf Ragtime Club in South Pasadena and is a favorite artist at Varenita Senior Living in Simi Valley.

In addition to playing and composing ragtime, Jared enjoys transcribing scans of old sheet music to post on his MuseScore account, discovering new rags from fellow composers, and researching the history of ragtime. He is also a piano roll arranger for the Ivory Music Rolls Co., arranging rolls of old and new ragtime works. Outside of ragtime, he enjoys volunteer work, camping and other outdoor activities with his Trail Life troop where he serves as First Officer, and participating in his teen discipleship group at church. Jared enjoys architecture and urban planning, and is particularly fascinated with the city of St. Louis for both its contributions to American music and its architectural significance. He hopes to pursue a career in architecture in the future.



Lilianne Tao, 14, is currently studying piano with Justin McKay. She won first place in the Paradise Symphony Orchestra's Young Artists Competition Junior Division in 2023 and the Senior Division in 2025. Lily also earned second place in

California Association of Professional Music Teachers (CAPMT) Go for the Gold Competition in 2023, and in March 2025, took second place in the World's Best Musicians International Competition for piano. She was the youngest featured artist at the West Coast

Ragtime Festival in both 2022 and 2024 and was named a California Arts Scholar after attending the California State Summer School of the Arts (CSSSA) in 2024.

A versatile young artist, Lily is also a soprano. She was a regional semifinalist and national qualifier in the 2024 National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) National Student Auditions, and went on to win first prize in voice at the 2025 World's Best Musicians International Competition. She has been accepted to attend Interlochen Arts Camp in summer 2025. A freshman at Chico High School, Lily enjoys reading, writing, STEM, and tennis. She is deeply engaged in community service, performing monthly at assistant living facilities in Chico for the past three years and organizing fundraising recitals that have raised over \$2,500 in support of the Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) and the Bidwell Mansion State Park recovery efforts.



Larry Wade served as a music teacher for forty-five years for grades K-14. He was on the Contest board for fifteen years and has formerly been a judge for the contest. Larry was a church musician for sixty-two years playing the piano and organ and

directing the choir. He has a Masters degree in piano and vocal performance and has been married for forty years with two sons and two grandchildren. Larry's youngest son is in the Air Force currently serving in Japan and the oldest son is a professional musician who is a former Junior Champion of the contest.



Bruce Walker began his music career in the 1970s as a ragtime and jazz pianist for area restaurants and ice-cream parlors. He is adept at most jazz and pop styles, and was the keyboardist for numerous cover bands, big bands, and headed his

own jazz/pop group Midnight Blue. He began playing ragtime and jazz piano as a teenager after being inspired by some early jazz recordings, and watching the 'ragtime piano lady' on The Lawrence Welk Show. Having taught himself to play and read music at an early age, Mr. Walker undertook formal studies while an engineering student in college. He has recently released an album called, "Old-Time Piano."

In addition to his musical accomplishments, Mr. Walker holds a degree in electrical engineering and is a retired Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Ohio, specializing in failure analysis, having worked for a prominent defense contractor, and a major manufacturer of Industrial Automation products



Barnabas Wilson, age 16, of College Park, Maryland, is a homeschooler who takes piano lessons with his father Russell Wilson. Barnabas also plays the accordion and the drumset. He is the founder of Bomb Shelter Studios where he produces stop motion animation videos

which can be found on his YouTube channel. Check out his movie, "The Hungry Chef."

He rides his bike two miles to and from the Berwyn Ballet School where he studies ballet and jazz dancing. Barnabas is good at science and fixing broken things. He also played the title role in his homeschool co-op production of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, which was written, composed, and choreographed by Barnabas, his sisters, and their friends.



Lydia Wilson, age ten, of College Park, Maryland, is a homeschooler who takes piano lessons with her father, Russell Wilson. She is eight minutes older than her twin sister, Mary. She plays violin in the College Park Youth Orchestra

and studies ballet. She is a two-time winner of the DC PBS kids' writing contest. She enjoys composing, and one of her musical compositions was chosen to be showcased at the Maryland Music Teachers' Association composers' showcase. She enjoys bird watching and loves her three cats. She also has a koi fish named Hieronymus.

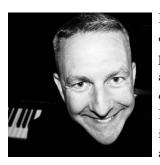


Mary Wilson of College Park, Maryland is a ten-year-old homeschooler who takes piano lessons with her father, Russell Wilson. She is Lydia's twin and plays violin with her in the College Park Youth Orchestra. She also plays the accordion. Mary studies ballet and has performed in the Nutcracker. Mary enjoys acting and writing and has won both first and second place in the DC PBS kids' writing contest. She has also won several local poetry contests. Mary is spunky and a lover of cats. She is super excited about getting to wear a giant hair bow for this contest.



Thirteen-year-old **Naomi Wilson** surprisingly, dislikes dill pickles (the food, not the rag). In keeping with good lyrical advice, she has never hit either of her grandmothers with a shovel or any other piece of gardening equipment.

In March, she broke her left arm in a skateboarding accident and lost six weeks of two-handed practice time. (Judges, please consider this when deciding her fate). She is homeschooled, has three siblings, and more importantly, three cats. Most likely, any competitor with the last name "Wilson" is related to her. In addition to the piano, Naomi plays guitar, cello, drums, accordion, and the glockenspiel. She enjoys writing short stories and poetry, painting, botany, birds, ballet, board games and wants to win Ist place.



Master Sergeant Russell Wilson of College Park, MD began piano lessons at age seven and by age twelve began playing hymns every Sunday for his church. He earned a Bachelor's degree in classical piano performance and a Masters degree in jazz,

both from the University of Maryland in College Park. In 2002, while a junior in college, he won a position in the President's Own US Marine Band where he plays all music styles on the piano, harpsichord, keyboard, and accordion, in public concerts and military events at the White House and all around Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. He plays gigs on the side as a soloist and in a variety of dance bands, and orchestras. In 2013 he won the World Championship Old Time Piano Playing Contest. He is married to Elizabeth, who teaches their four children, Barnabas, Naomi, Mary, and Lydia at their home in College Park, MD. He continues to play at church every Sunday.

REGULAR DIVISION PRELIMINARY ELIMINATIONS SCORECARD

The order of play will be determined by drawing at 8:00 Saturday morning & will be posted for spectators. Fill in the order of play, sit back, and enjoy the competition. Rules and scoring categories used by the judges are described on pages 20-23.

1. Name:	7. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	
2. Name:	8. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	
3. Name:	9. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
4. Name:	10. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
5. Name:	11. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
6. Name:	12. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:

REGULAR DIVISION SEMI*FINALS SCORECARD

1. Name:	6. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
2. Name:	7. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
3. Name:	8. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
4. Name:	9. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
5. Name:	10. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:

REGULAR DIVISION FINALS SCORECARD

1. Name:	4. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
2. Name:	5. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
3. Name:	
#1:	
#2:	

JUDGING GUIDELINES

RATING SCALE:

- 5 = SUPERIOR
- 4 = EXCELLENT
- z = GOOD
- 2 = FAIR
- 1 = NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. TECHNIQUE

FINGER DEXTERITY
NOTE ACCURACY
PEDAL USE
KEYBOARD COVERAGE
DIFFICULTY
MUSICAL VARIETY
possible pts this category: 30

2. STYLE /INTERPRETATION

TEMPO RHYTHM
ORIGINALITY MUSICALITY
ARTICULATION & PHRASING
CONTRAST & DYNAMICS
INTERPRETATION
PREPARATION
possible pts this category: 40

3. SHOWMANSHIP

STAGE PRESENCE
POISE & COMMAND
AUDIENCE RAPPORT
SALESMANSHIP
MUSICAL PRODUCT
APPLAUSE
possible pts this category: 20

4. COSTUME

AUTHENTIC or REPLICA (circle one)

COSTUME
MAKEUP/GROOMING

possible pts this category: 10



JUNIOR DIVISION SCORECARD

1. Name:		4. Name:		7. Name:_	
#1:		#1:		#1:	
#2:		#2:		#2:	
	points:	F	points:		points:
2. Name:		5. Name:		8. Name:_	
#1:		#1:		#1:	
#2:		#2:		#2:	
		F			
3. Name:		6. Name:		9. Name:_	
#1:		#1:		#1:	
		#2:			
	points:	r	ooints:		points:
Iune:					
	Points:			Points:	
2. Name:			7. Name:		
Tune:			Tune:		
	Points:		_	Points:	
Tune:					
	Points:			Points:	
			_		
Tune:					
	Points:		_	Points:	
5. Name:			10. Name:		
Tune:			Tune:		
	Б.			Б.:	

SENIOR DIVISION SCORECARD

1. Name:	5. Name:
#1:	#1:
	#2:
	Points:
2. Name:	6. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
3. Name:	7. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
Points:	Points:
4. Name:	8. Name:
#1:	#1:
#2:	#2:
	Points



CHAMPS THROUGH THE YEARS

(*denotes retired 3-time champions)



REGULAR DIVISION

Joybelle Squibb, 1975-76 Dorothy M. Herrold, 1977-79* Bruce Petsche, 1980 Mark Haldorson, 1981-83* Janet Kaizer, 1984-85 Ron Trotta, 1986-88* Julie McClarey, 1989, 1995-96 Marty Mincer, 1990, 1993 "Perfessor" Bill Edwards, 1991 Paul Gronemeier, 1992 Mimi Blais, 1994, 2000 Brian Holland, 1997-99* Dan Mouyard, 2001, 2003 Adam Downey, 2002 Adam Yarian, 2004-6* Ethan Uslan, 2007, 2012, 2014* Adam Swanson, 2008-10, 2015* Martin Spitznagel, 2011 Russell Wilson, 2013 William McNally, 2016-17 Jean-Baptiste Franc, 2018 Paul Orsi, 2019, 2023-24 Eve Elliot, 2022

SENIOR DIVISION

John Remmers, 2018 Bobby van Deusen, 2019, 2022-23 Faye Ballard 2024

DUET CONTEST

Bill Edwards & Adam Swanson 2015 Adam Swanson & 4 Arrows 2016 Daniel Souvigny & Nathan Beasley 2017 Adam Swanson & Daniel Souvigny 2018

JUNIOR DIVISION

Neil Moe, 1985-87* Dax Baumgartner, 1988-90* Adam Downey, 1991-93* Marty Sammon, 1994-95 Dan Mouyard, 1996 Noah Harmon, 1997 Adam Yarian, 1998-2000* Harrison Wade, 2001, 2005 Will Best, 2002 Adam Swanson, 2003-4, 2006* Wesley Reznicek, 2007, 2009 Cassidy Gephart, 2008 Morgan Siever, 2010-11 Isaac Smith, 2013 Daniel Souvigny, 2012, 2014-15* Nina Freeman, 2016 Nathan Beasley, 2017 Kelton Boblits, 2018-19 John Beggs, 2022 John Patrick Hutchinson, 2023 John Beggs, 2024

NEW RAG CONTEST

Gale Foehner - 1997
Carondelet
Mimi Blais - 1998
The Turkey
Michael Stalcup - 1999
Short Mountain Falldown
Dan Mouyard - 2000
Mojo's Marbles
Bill Edwards - 2001-2, 2016
The Necromancer
The Wiener Schnitzel
Le Syncope du Papillon
David Feurzeig - 2003
Stride-Rite Rag

Ted Lemen - 2004-5 The Last Rag Standing The Number 2 Rag John Harmon - 2006 The Raspberry Rag Martin Spitznagel - 2007, 2011, 2017 Red Elephant Rag The Smoky Rose Dreams of Irene Bill McNally - 2008-9, 2012 Blue Donkey Rag Mocha Monkey Rag Fancy Flight Jacob Adams - 2010, 2017-18 Procrastinaporag Quintessential Rag Split Personality Rag Adam Swanson - 2013 Strater Shuffle Vincent Matthew Johnson - 2014 "...And So Fourth" David Cavalari - 2015, 2019 That 45 RPM Rag The Nickelodeon Rag Sam Post - 2021 Lighthouse Rag Warren Ertle - 2022 Yellow Hammer Rag Paul Orsi, Tom Lakeland & Adam Swanson – 2023 Transatlantic Rag Thomas Lakeland – 2024

The Ivory-Billed Woodpecker



2025 OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES

These are the Official Rules for the 2025 edition of the World Championship Old-time Piano Playing Contest and Festival. The "Piano Contest" rules below have been revised, so please read them carefully.

Note: On Saturday, May 24, 2025, Regular, Junior, and Senior Division contestants must draw for playing order at 8:00 a.m. in Rm. #153 of the Music Building.

PIANO CONTEST REGULAR DIVISION

DATES: The two-day competition to determine the World Champion Old-time Piano Player takes place over Saturday and Sunday of Memorial Day weekend each year. Although festival events begin on May 22, the actual contest dates are May 24-25, 2025.

ELIGIBILITY: Pianists ages 18-and-older are eligible to compete. Pianists of any age will be eligible to compete in the New Rag and Duet Contests. *Three-time winners are no longer eligible to compete in this division.

PRELIMINARY ROUND: Contestants must compete in the Preliminary Eliminations (PE's) on Saturday in order to advance to the Semi-Finals and Finals that take place on Sunday afternoon. The PE's will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and continue until each contestant has been heard, with a lunch break scheduled about 11:30 a.m.

SEMI-FINALS & FINALS: Those advancing to the semi-finals will be announced on-stage at the conclusion of Saturday's Preliminary Round. An immediate drawing will take place to determine playing position for Sunday's Semi-final Round. The Semi-Finals will begin at 1:30 pm on Sunday with no more than ten (10) Regular Division contestants advancing from Saturday's Preliminary Eliminations. The number of contestants selected for the Semi-Final round is at the discretion of the judges. The Semi-Finals will narrow the field of contestants to the final five (5), who will then compete immediately in the Finals to determine the winner and other finishing places.

REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Contestants need to prepare five (5) different selections written no later than 1939 (no medleys allowed), one of which must be a ballad or standard

popular song, and not considered "Ragtime". At no point may selections be repeated in subsequent rounds.

- 2. The music must be memorized. Two selections are played in the PE's, and each player who advances into the Semi-Finals on Sunday afternoon will play two more selections that meet contest requirements. The theme piece must be performed before the Finals round.
- 3. Contestants must provide the title, composer and year written for all selections to be played on their official entry blank, and must be prepared to document a composition's age if challenged.
- 4. Contestants may change their selections up until the entry deadline of May 15 when selections must be finalized and after which date no revisions to the play list may be made.
- 5. Contestants must submit a repertoire list that includes all of the selections they will play in the Preliminary, Semi-final and Final rounds not later than the registration deadline of May 15. No changes are permitted after that date. Contestants are not required to reveal repertoire for specific rounds, rather, each contestant may choose their repertoire from their "pool" list provided. Contestants advancing to the semi-finals must adhere to the theme requirement.
- 6. A contestant failing to provide their playlist by the deadline may re-enter with a late fee if space in the field permits.
- 7. No religious or patriotic selections are allowed, and vocal or instrumental accompaniment is prohibited.
- 8. On stage, contestants need provide only the title and composer of their selections prior to their playing although additional information may be requested by the contest MC during their onstage interview. Composer names must appear on each entry.
- 9. For the purpose of the World Championship Old-time Piano Playing Contest, the following definition of "old-time" music will apply:

The style of piano playing found primarily in public venues of performance between 1890 and 1939, particularly in bars and piano competitions, consisting of popular songs and instrumentals of that era, including ragtime, traditional jazz, novelty, stride, and boogie, but excluding advanced chord progressions more commonly found by 1940 or later in symphonic, modern jazz and be bop music forms. Selections may also include music idiomatic to solo piano performance and popular dance styles.



2025 THEME: Contestants who advance to the Semi-finals on Sunday afternoon will play two (2) selections of their choice, one of which must be the theme piece (if not performed already). The 2025 theme is "Tune That Name," requiring that players include one selection with the proper name of a man or woman (real or fictional) in the title. Some examples might include Daisy Belle; Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home; The King Porter Stomp; Mary's A Grand Old Name; or I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen. This should allow for lots of variety in the programming for this year. *Note that the "theme" does not apply to Junior or Senior competitors.

SCORING: Point totals are cumulative. Point totals from the PE's determine contestants for the Semi-Finals. Point totals from the Semi-Finals will be added to the point totals from the PE's to determine the top five (5) players who then advance to the Finals, where point totals will again be combined.

JUDGING CRITERIA: Judges will award points in each round based on technique, style and interpretation, showmanship and costume. In the event of a tie in points for any place, that contestant with the higher point total in technique will prevail, with the order of other tie-breaking categories to be: style and interpretation, showmanship, and costume.

TIME LIMIT: For the PE's and Semi-Finals, a total of eight (8) minutes playing time is allowed for each contestant's performance for both tunes (not including time for audience applause, interview time with the emcee, etc.). Contestants exceeding the time limits will be penalized five (5) points for each fifteen (15) seconds or fraction thereof, of overtime. Six (6) minutes is allotted for those who make the Finals.

COSTUME: Costumes are required, and the judges will award points based on their old-time appearance or authenticity in the PE's, Semi-Finals and Finals. Contestants will declare on the entry form whether their costumes are to be judged as authentic period dress (actual or replica) or theatrical performance-type, and they will be judged accordingly.

CHALLENGES: Challenges to a contestant's selection must be made within five (5) minutes after the playing of the selection has been completed. Other contestants, contest officials and judges may challenge selections for age or other reasons. In the event that a selection does not qualify after it is challenged, the person playing it will be disqualified.

CONTESTANT DRAW: Contestants in all Divisions will report to our "Green Room" on Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. prior to the PE's so lots can be drawn for the order of play, and contestants can receive any last-minute instructions. Contestants not in attendance at this time cannot participate in the contest. (Please note that contestants should bring their costume with them to this drawing for the order of play on Saturday morning as there will not be time to return to the hotel to get them before the first few contestants are scheduled to compete by 9 a.m. For this reason, a complimentary light breakfast we be available in the Green Room on Saturday morning for contestants for their convenience.)

During the actual competitions, if a contestant is not on hand when their playing position is called, the contestant will be considered to have withdrawn from competition. Order of play for the Semi-Finals and Finals will be drawn on stage as soon as practical after completion of judging for that round, respectively.

ENTRY FEE: Each entry form must be accompanied by a \$75 entry fee. A \$25 late fee will be added if not received by the May 1 deadline. This is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

EXPENSES: The World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest and Festival is not responsible for the cost of travel, meals, lodging or other expenses incurred while competing.

CONTESTANT TICKETS: The contest will provide each contestant with one (1) complimentary all-event ticket for their use plus one additional ticket for a family member or guest.

No complimentary tickets are provided for catered events or excursions. Contestants should advise when entering the contest if another ticket is needed. After-hours events are complimentary for all contestants.

DEADLINE: The total number of contestants is limited to the first 30 paid entries, and each entry form shall list that contestant's music selections, to be updated no later than May 1, the contest deadline. Entries will be accepted for up to fourteen (14) Regular Division contestants; six (6) Senior contestants and ten (10) Junior Division contestants. After the deadline, any remaining slots will be filled from the waiting list on a first-come basis without regard to Division.

ENTRY SUBMISSION: The Contest Coordinator, William McNally, will answer rule and contestant questions at this address: pianobill@gmail.com.



On line entries will be instantly processed and will assure your registration. Mailed entries are subject to delays, and no entry will be considered official until the appropriate fee is received, with checks made out to the University of Mississippi – May Piano Contest. The address for mail-in entries is Old-Time Piano Contest, c/o lan Hominick, University of Mississippi Dept. of Music, PO Box 1848, University, MS 38677-1848. Walk-on entries will be accepted on the Saturday of competition until the limit of 30 contestants has been reached or the drawing for order of play has begun, whichever comes first. A late fee of an additional \$50 shall apply to entries received after the deadline of May 1.

2025 PRIZES: The winner will receive \$2,000, a golden medallion, a permanent trophy and free lodging for the following year's contest. Second place will receive \$1,250 and a silver medallion. Third place will receive \$750 and a bronze medallion. Fourth and fifth places will be awarded cash prizes of \$500 and \$250 respectively, and will also receive bronze medallions. Checks will be mailed to the winners within two weeks of the conclusion of the contest (winners must be sure to complete a W-9 form on site). *Three-time winners of any specific Contest are not eligible to enter again.

ADDITIONAL RULES:

- By competing in the contest, participants agree to allow the use of their photographs and recorded performances to promote the event.
- Disputes arising from the competitions or judging will be resolved by the contest judges, who will make the final decision.
- By entering the competition, the contestant agrees to supply his/her social security number if necessary to comply with United States tax laws.
- Contestants must provide complete information on the contest application including home town media contacts. Each contestant should send 1-2 color photographs (minimum 300 ppi) and a short one-paragraph biography for inclusion in the contest program to Ian Hominick at oldtimepianocontest@olemiss.edu
- The use of alcohol or other controlled substances prior to or during competitions may result in disqualification.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR THE JUNIOR DIVISION

*Note: Junior contestants should also read all of the Regular Division rules, as many apply to both divisions!

ELIGIBILITY: Junior contestants are defined as those 18 years of age or under on the day of

competition. Any contestant winning the Junior Division a total of three (z) times (not necessarily in consecutive years) may no longer compete in the Junior Division. However, the age requirement will be waived for them, and they may then compete in the Regular Division.

FORMAT: Up to ten (10) Junior Division contestants play on Saturday and the Junior Division champ will be announced at the close of the Junior Contest. Each Junior Division contestant must prepare two (2) selections, but are not required to play mandatory standard tunes or comply with the "theme selection" as required in the Regular Division.

PRIZES: The Junior Champion will be awarded a prize of \$600 and a permanent trophy. A second-place prize of \$400 and third-place prize of \$200 will also be awarded. The Junior Division champion is traditionally invited to make a special appearance Sunday afternoon to play a tune on stage prior to the beginning of the competitions.

TIME LIMIT: A total of eight (8) minutes playing time is allowed for each contestant's performance of both their tunes (not including time for audience applause, interview time with the emcee, etc.). The penalty for playing in excess of the time limit prescribed is five (5) points for each 30 seconds, or fraction thereof, of overtime.

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee for the Junior Division is \$50 with a penalty fee for late entry of \$25 if not received by the May 1 deadline. This entry fee is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

PARENTAL CONSENT: Contestants in the Junior Division must have their entry confirmed by a parent.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR THE SENIOR DIVISION

*Note: Senior contestants should also read all of the Regular Division rules, as many apply to both divisions! Senior contestants may NOT enter both the Regular Division AND Senior Contest.

ELIGIBILITY: Senior contestants are defined as those 60 years of age or older on the day of competition. Any contestant winning the Senior Division a total of three (3) times (not necessarily in consecutive years) may no longer be declared champion in the Senior Division. However, the contestant may continue to perform in any other eligible contest.



FORMAT: A total of six (6) Senior Division contestants may play two selections each on Saturday. Three (3) contestants may be chosen to advance to perform two selections each on Sunday's Semi-finals, after which the champion will be selected. Senior contestants are not required to play the "theme selection" as required in the Regular Division.

REPERTOIRE: Contestants need to prepare four (4) different selections written no later than 1939 (no medleys allowed), one of which must be a ballad or standard popular song, and not considered "ragtime". The music must be memorized. Two selections are played in the PE's, and each player who advances into the Semi-Finals on Sunday afternoon will play two more selections that meet contest requirements. Contestants are not required to reveal repertoire for specific rounds, rather, each contestant may choose their repertoire from their "pool" list provided. Contestants may play their selections in any order from their list within each round as long as selections are not repeated.

2025 PRIZES: The Senior Champion will be awarded a prize of \$350 and a permanent trophy. A second-place prize of \$200 and third-place prize of \$100 will also be awarded.

TIME LIMIT: A total of eight (8) minutes playing time is allowed for each contestant's performance of both their tunes (not including time for audience applause, interview time with the emcee, etc.). The penalty for playing in excess of the time limit prescribed is five (5) points for each 30 seconds, or fraction thereof, of overtime.

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee for the Senior Division is \$35 with a penalty fee for late entry past May 1 of \$25. This entry fee is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

NEW RAG CONTEST

ELIGIBILITY: Contestants of any age are eligible to compete.

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee is \$50 and is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

TIME LIMIT: A five-minute time limit applies from a tune's start to finish.

PRIZE: The prize for the New Rag Contest shall be \$350 and a trophy.

PERFORMANCE: A competitor may play a composition themselves or designate another piano player to do so for them beginning at 6:00 pm on Friday following a drawing for the order of play. The competition will continue until all have been heard, with the single winner being announced by the judges following the close of the competition. Composers who are not in attendance must solicit a performer and provide the printed score to the performer no later than one month in advance. NOTE: *Contest personnel are NOT available to play New Rags.

SPECIFICATIONS: To qualify, the composition entered must be an original Rag, with three or more themes, that has not been previously published, recorded for sale, or previously played in this contest. *Composers are limited to one entry per year.*

STYLE: The selection should adhere as close as possible to the authentic form, melody, rhythm and harmonic language of the ragtime era. Three to four sections are compulsory, each containing distinct contrasting themes. New works should also contain familiar rhythmic features normally associated with ragtime such as syncopation and regularly accented accompaniment. Composers are permitted creative latitude with regard to melody and harmony while, at the same time, adhering to the historic definition of a "rag."

JUDGING: The contest provides qualified judges familiar with the music and capable of judging the composer's success in writing Ragtime music. Each composition will be judged on originality, musicality and audience appeal. A written score of the music is not required by the judges.

ENTRY DEADLINE: The New Rag Contest is strictly limited to a total of ten (10) competitors. Walk-on entries will be allowed provided there are fewer than 10 advance entries. The entry fee is \$50 with a penalty of \$25 if not received by the May 1 deadline. The entry fee is not refundable unless the contest is cancelled.

ENTRY SUBMISSION: The Contest Coordinator, Bobby van Deusen, will answer rule and contestant questions at this address: mrpiano@cox.net. On line entries will be instantly processed and assure registration. Mailed entries are subject to delays, and no entry will be considered official until the appropriate fee is received, with checks made out to the University of Mississippi – May Piano Contest. The address for mail-in entries is Old-Time Piano Contest, c/o lan Hominick, University of Mississippi Dept. of Music, PO Box 1848, University, MS 38677-1848.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Contest would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their contribution to this year's event.

The University of Mississippi Department of Music Visit Oxford The Old Henry

PLUS all of the students and individuals from the community who have stepped forward to help make this event run smoothly.





Music





Thank you to the folks at **The Old Henry** for partnering with us as the official "after-hours" site for 2025!

Join us each evening for the after-hours at 1002 East Jackson Ave., Oxford, MS.

CONTEST PERSONNEL



TED LEMEN Founder and Emcee Bradley, IL



IAN HOMINICK Artistic Director & Site Coordinator Oxford, MS



ADAM SWANSON Co-Emcee & Junior Contest Coordinator Durango, CO



WILLIAM MCNALLY Regular & Contest Coordinator Cleveland, OH



BOBBY van DEUSEN New Rag Contest Coordinator Pensacola, FL



PORTIA DAVIS Judging Assistant Jackson, MS



EVELYN HUTCHINSON Card Girl Rockingham, NC



CHARLIE MILES A/V Technical Director Oxford, MS



JACOB SNELL Assistant A/V Technical Director Oxford, MS



ANDREA DRUMMOND Publicity Oxford, MS



AMELIA WILLIAMS Logistical Assistant Oxford, MS



JEANNE LIPPINCOTT Sales Oxford, MS



MICHAEL FLORES Student Assistant San Juan Capistrano, CA



PATRICK LENEHAN Photographer Chicago, IL



TRACY DeLEONE Publicist Eldorado, AR

Thank you to all community volunteers who have stepped forward to assist with this year's event!



OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

Thank you to all who have donated to the Contest over the past year. Your generosity is much appreciated as this greatly assists with logistics and expenses. The Contest does not operate with a budget from the university so any and all donations are vital to the continuation of this unique event. Those interested in assisting can donate in several ways:

CHECKS should be made payable to: University of Mississippi May Piano Contest

Mailing address: Ian Hominick, Contest Artistic Director

UM Department of Music

PO Box 1848

University, MS 38677-1848



PAYPAL

PayPal.Me/OldTimePianoContest

Donate using your PayPal account by typing in type in oldtimepianocontest@gmail.com (don't be alarmed if your receipt comes with your donation having been given to an individual)



VENMO

@OldTimePianoContest



A huge thank-you to a very special donor who has provided funding to make it possible to increase prize money and host some very special guest artists. This anonymous gift is dedicated to all of the prior Piano Pals and volunteers who have donated thousands of hours to make the Contest possible.

Thank you for thinking of us and we hope you have a fantastic weekend!





THROUGH THE YEARS



Two-time champion Janet Kazier of Peoria, tried several times for the elusive third win but never cinched it.



Contestant and future judge Linda Harmon of Winneconne, WI performs on the outdoor stage at the Monticello High School.



Judy Leschewski and our third three-time champion, Ron Trotta, who later became the musical TV weatherman in New York City.



Double Decker Bus Tour, 2017



Contest Founder and Emcee Ted Lemen does a clarinet glissando with Wally on the accordion, Peoria IL.



In 1986, the contest took place on a semi-truck flatbed with a canvas tarp over the top to protect contestants from incremental mists that day.



2022 Card Girls Michaela Shields & Karen Wade





Four Time Champion & 2025 Co-Emcee Adam Swanson performing



Maggie Hall, 2025



2019's Top Five: (L to R) Bill Edwards, Paul Orsi, Michael Drexler, David Cavalari & Jean-Baptiste Franc



Four Arrows, 2019



Anderson Pries & Ted Lemen 2024



Adam Downey of Michigan was all smiles as Judy Leschewski handed him the Junior Division



2022 five finalists - Bill Edwards, Warren Ertle, Paul Stewart, Eve Elliot (champion), Paul Orsi



Bill Perry at the Mad Hatter





2022 Junior Competitors



Card Girl Karen Wade changes performer cards



2022 Junior contestant Alexander Hutchinson of North Carolina dons a mustache to make his costume complete



2017 David Cavalari performing



2024 Jean-Baptiste Franc performing



Warren Ertle performing



Paul Orsi, Ted Lemen, Michael Drexler in 2024







Ted Lemen, Festival Founder



John Patrick Hutchinson, Jr. performing



Diana Stein Interview



Mar Bombelli playing the marimba





Gospel Rag Service with Bobby van Deusen



William McNally with Leo Rainey



Paul Orsi with Judges Judy Carmichael, Bill Perry Jr., and Todd Robbins



Bill Edwards with Karen Wade Card



Riley Brown & Jeanne Lippincott



Saturday Showcase at the Powerhouse - Corpse Revivers



Mad Hatter performance featuring Ricky Burkhead, Adam Swanson, and Ted Lemen



Judges with Portia Davis



Larry Wade



Larry Koonse performs with Judy Carmichael



Contestant Group Photo: Contest Draw



Contest Judges and Junior Division Winners





Zach Mandernach performing Corpse Revivers with Jamie Shannon



Kathleen, Jared, and Roland Szabo enjoy the Trolley Tour





GUEST ARTIST CONCERT

featuring

Richard Dowling Sue Keller

Paul Orsi Adam Swanson

Saturday · May 24th 7:00pm · Nutt Auditorium