

**Jackson Madison County
African American Chamber of Commerce**

*14th Annual
Jewel Awards Banquet*

Celebrating Jackson's
Music Heritage and Honoring
Outstanding
African American
Small Business Owners

Featuring in Concert

Harmonic Vibrations



Friday, February 27, 2015

6:30 p.m.

Oman Arena

Jackson, Tennessee

HISTORICAL PIONEERS:

JACKSON'S MUSIC HERITAGE

1930'S TO THE PRESENT DAY

Jackson's music heritage is rich, with roots in gospel, blues, R&B, soul, jazz and opera. This year, we are recognizing 15 artists with roots in Jackson, Tennessee who have had a national or global impact on the music industry. While they are profiled in alphabetical order, these beautiful and highly talented men and women actively performed during from the 1930s to the present day. In a few cases, careers were short-lived while others spanned two, three or even more decades.



Big Maybelle **The First Lady of Rock and Roll**

Mabel Louise Smith was born on May 1, 1924 in Jackson, Tennessee. She began her professional career at age 12 with Dave Clark's Memphis Band in 1936. She also toured with the all-female International Sweethearts of Rhythm. She then joined Christine Chatman's Orchestra as pianist, and made her first recordings with Chatman in 1944. Her debut solo recordings were for King Records in 1947. In 1952 she signed with Okeh Records, and was rebranded 'Big Maybelle'. In 1955 she recorded "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On", produced by up-and-coming producer Quincy Jones, two years before Jerry Lee Lewis. Her 1959 hit "Candy" received the Grammy Hall of Fame Award in 1999. Had she not died in her mid-

40s on , there is no telling where her place in music history would be today.



Dave Clark **The Father of Black Record Promotions**

Born in 1909 in Jackson, Dave Clark went on to become the first major promoter of black recorded music in America. He grew up in Chicago but attended Lane College in Jackson. After graduation, he started a blues band in Memphis, discovered Mabel Smith singing in church, and handled promotions for a Jackson dance promoter. Returning to Chicago, he wrote a jazz column for *Downbeat* magazine, and handled promotions for several small record companies. This was followed by work with major record companies -- Aristocrat, Chess, Ronel, Duke-Peacock, Stax Records and others. He played a major role in the success of many artists (*like Bobby "Blue" Bland, Junior Parker, O.V. Wright, Little Milton, the Staple Singers, KC and the Sunshine Band, and Betty Wright*). Also a songwriter, he co-wrote "Why I Sing The Blues" and "Chains and

Things" with B.B. King. When he moved to Malaco Records in 1980, he was able to attract Z.Z. Hill, Johnnie Taylor, Bobby Bland and Denise LaSalle to the label.



Christine Chatman
Vocalist, Pianist, Composer and Band Leader

Born October 9, 1920 in Jackson, Tenn., Christine Chatman played a “mean” boogie piano with rousing vocals. For a time, she led a 7-piece band out of Indianapolis. The Christine Chatman Orchestra featured two trumpets, two saxes, piano, accordion, bass, and drums. The band was heavily promoted by the Ferguson brothers, on the now famous Chitlin' Circuit. In 1944, she recorded four numbers with Decca in New York City. On the first release, one side was titled "Naptown Boogie"; the other, "Hurry, Hurry," was the recording debut of Big Maybelle. She also recorded a number of sides for Aristocrat in the late 1940s. In 1951, she recorded two singles with Peppy Prince in Hollywood. She was featured on the cover of *Blues & Rhythm* magazine #224. The daughter of Dr.

Charles E. Chatman and Josie Bond Chatman, she passed away in December 1979.



Rev. Cleavant Derricks
Pastor, Choir Director, Songwriter

A Chattanooga native born in 1910, Rev. Cleavant Derricks was a pastor, choir director, poet and songwriter. He attended Cadek Conservatory of Music in Knoxville, A & I State University and American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville. At age 21, he directed a gospel choir of more than 100 voices in Washington, D.C. at the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church. He counted among his friends many well-known artists, like Mahalia Jackson. A church builder, he pastored Baptist churches throughout Tennessee in Dayton, Knoxville, Henderson and Jackson’s own Macedonia Baptist Church, from 1952-1958 as well as in Beloit, Wisconsin and in Washington, D.C. He composed more than 300 songs and several songbook. Among his more famous songs

are the much-recorded and performed "Just a Little Talk with Jesus", "When God Dipped His Love In My Heart", "We'll Soon Be Done With Troubles and Trials", and "When He Blessed My Soul". The father of twin sons, Cleavant Derricks and Clinton Derricks-Carroll, he was born May 13, 1910, he passed away August 14, 1977 in his hometown. He was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 1984.



Ruby Falls
Country Singer

Bertha Dorsey was born Bertha Frances Bearden in 1946 in Jackson, Tennessee. Under her stage name, Ruby Falls, she released 9 singles between 1975 and 1979. She began singing at an early age in church and at local events. When she was a teenager, she moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She actually became a professional entertainer at that time and worked with several local bands including Harvey Scales and the Seven Sounds as their lead singer. She moved to Nashville in 1974, Ruby Falls is considered “the most successful black female country singer.” Her first single, “Sweet Country Music,” was a #86 hit in 1975. She was nominated as country’s most promising female vocalist in

1975 by country industry trade media. Being one of the few black women to do country music, she had 9 singles hit the charts from 1975-1979. She died suddenly at the age of 40 from a brain hemorrhage in Nashville on June 15, 1986. She was survived by her mother, Lillian Hightower and two daughters.



Joe Hunter
Pianist and Band Leader

The son of a piano teacher, Joseph Edward Hunter spent his early life in Jackson before moving to Detroit. One of the original Funk Brothers, his versatile and unique style of piano playing was a key part of the Motown Sound. He served as band leader from 1959 until 1964. He backed up artists like Smokey Robinson and the Miracles and Stevie Wonder. He left a lasting impression on future Motown musicians. Among the many records he performed piano for are: "Shop Around" by The Miracles, "Do You Love Me" by The Contours and "Heat Wave" by Martha & the Vandellas. He earned three Grammy Awards with the group and the Funk Brothers were awarded the Grammy Legend Award in 2004 and were inducted into Nashville's Music Hall of Fame in 2007. Born November 19, 1927, he remained a full-

time musician until his death on February 2, 2007 at age 79.



Luther Ingram
"If Loving You Is Wrong"

Luther Thomas Ingram was one of nine children (seven boys and two girls) born to Richard Lee and Callie Ingram of Jackson, Tennessee. In 1947 when Luther was 10, the family moved to Alton, Illinois. Very soon, he and his brothers Archie and Richard put together a gospel singing group with neighborhood friends, calling themselves the Illinois Jubilee Quartet and later the Midwest Crusaders. In 1956 they were advised by Ike Turner to sing R&B and renamed themselves The Gardenias. But, they continued to perform gospel as the Mid-West Crusaders. In 1956, they record four songs on the Federal label backed by Ike Turner's Kings of Rhythm. By 1965, Luther had

moved to New York and began a solo career with Decca Records. He is best known for the hit song, "If Loving You Is Wrong, I Don't Want To Be Right," which sold 4 million copies. His other popular tracks included "Ain't That Loving You (For More Reasons Than One)," "Let's Steal Away To The Hideaway" and "I'll Be Your Shelter." He also co-wrote "Respect Yourself", a million seller for Stax Recording artists The Staple Singers in 1971. Born in 1937, he passed away in 2007 from complications with diabetes.

The Jacksonians



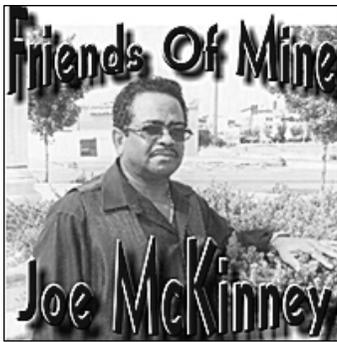
Formed in 1968 by Farris Lanier, Sr., The Jacksonians went on to become the premier R&B/Soul band from Jackson, Tennessee. The band quickly found success as the backing group for Fred Towles following their debut recording of "Hook

It To The Mule." They became a touring band for Eddie Floyd on his tour to Jamaica. They also performed with Rufus Thomas and Denise LaSalle during a tour of Africa. Thanks to Sam Frazier, who also had played with Ike and Tina Turner and Jackie Wilson, the band appeared on *American Bandstand* performing their rendition of "After I Cry Tonight." Members included Farris Lanier Jr., Fennoye Lanier, Joseph McKinney, Lee Freeman, and Sam Frazier. The group changed its name to Lanier & Co. in 1982 and later released two albums and 6 singles, including a cover version of "California Dreamin'."



Farris Lanier, Jr.
Lead Singer

Farris Lanier, Jr. became the front man and lead singer for the Jacksonians. His velvet smooth voice caught the attention of several record producers to include Willie Mitchell, Dan Greer, Al Green, and Fred Jordan. On a production team led by Gene “Bowlegs” Miller, Farris' voice was the primary element in the highly successful recording by the band for LARC Records. This recording prompted the band to change their name to Lanier & Co. serving to establish Farris as the main attraction in the band formally known as the Jacksonians.



Joseph McKinney
Music Man

A graduate of West High School where Phillips Reynolds was band director, Joseph McKinney began his professional music career with the Phillips Reynolds Band before becoming a trumpet player with the Jacksonians band. By the time that the group had reached their peak and undergone a name change to Lanier and Company, he had switched from trumpet to keyboard. As a keyboard player, he went on to play with Little Milton and Lynn White before fronting his own group the Joe McKinney Project. He was keyboard player for Willie Mitchell's last European tour and also served as a session musician at Hi Recording. Joe McKinney currently performs with Smooth Jazz Progressions and serves as a music executive for RamTea Music.

His current CD, *Friends of Mine*, features “Got Loving You On My Mind” as the lead song.



Kurl McKinney
Authentic Beale Street Musician

A living legend, Kurl McKinney is still playing piano and performing live in venues like The Peabody and First Baptist Chelsea in Memphis, Tenn. A member of the Lane College band, he graduated in 1959 and in married Lane choir member Ruth Bryant in 1960. He played with the Phillip Reynolds Band and recorded an album on the Sam Phillips label. He helped organize The Memphians dance band and for 13 years, he managed and was keyboard player for the group. He also played with the Bowlegs Miller Band, the Ben Branch Band, and the Prince Gabe Band. In 1988, he accompanied Rufus and Carla Thomas on their tour of Japan while performing with the Alfred Rudd Soft Fire Band. He taught band in Memphis and Shelby County schools for 41 years. His sons Paul McKinney and Alvin McKinney are also musicians.



Laurice Lanier
Opera Singer

Laurice Lanier-Trowell, considered "one of the most versatile voices on the planet", is originally from Jackson, Tenn. While a high school student at South Side High School, her talent was noticed by her piano teacher Alice Dunn and chorus teacher Jean Hammons. Now a classically-trained mezzo soprano, she is a graduate of The Juilliard School where her strong vocal training came from the incomparable, Edith Bers. Ms. Lanier has over 16 years of teaching music privately, directing choirs, and conducting Master Classes. She has performed various roles in opera houses and in theatres, concerts halls, private functions, and churches throughout the United States and abroad. Her performances include *Handel's Messiah* with the Met. She is a member of 3 Mo' Divas, whose CD was nominated for a

2010 NAACP Image Award. She is the owner and head performing arts instructor for Laurice Lanier Studios.



Denise LaSalle
Queen of the Blues

Ora Denise Allen, known by the stage name Denise LaSalle, is a Blues and R&B/soul singer, songwriter, and record producer who has been recognized as the "Queen of the Blues". Her first single, "A Love Reputation" was a modest regional hit. Her song "Trapped By A Thing Called Love" (1971) -- released on Detroit-based Westbound Records -- reached #1 on the national R&B chart, #13 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart and scored a millions sales by the end of that year. In the early 1980s, she signed as a singer and songwriter with Malaco Records, for whom she released a string of critically acclaimed albums over more than 20 years, starting with *Lady in the Street* (1983) and *Right Place, Right Time* (1984). LaSalle now lives with her husband, James E. Wolfe, in Jackson, Tennessee.



John Parrish
Trumpeter, The Whispers

A graduate of Merry High School and Lane College, John Henry Parrish, Jr. taught at Central High in Paris, Tennessee. He organized the school's first band which won first place in the West Tennessee District Band Festival. Locally, he performed with O.C. Cole, Phillip Reynolds and other musical groups before moving to the California Bay area. In 1973, he received a call from The Whispers and within 3 months became the group's musical director and later arranger, writer and trumpeter for 20 years. With The Whispers, he acquired five gold records and one platinum album. In 1982, he served as guest conductor for the Miles Davis Tribute at Radio City Music Hall. He returned home in 1986 and taught in the Jackson School System. Born in June 29, 1940, he passed away March 5, 1993.



Gil Scott-Heron
Jazz Poet and Bluesologist

Gilbert "Gil" Scott-Heron had a poetic style that has influenced every generation of hip-hop. Raised in Jackson, Tennessee by his grandmother, he became an internationally-known American soul and jazz poet, musician, and author. His collaborative efforts with musician Brian Jackson featured a fusion of jazz, blues, and soul infused with lyrical content concerning social and political issues of the time that Gil delivered in rapping and melismatic vocal style. He called himself a "bluesologist." One of his best known composition is "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised."



Sonny Boy Williamson
Blues Harmonica

John Lee Curtis "Sonny Boy" Williamson was a blues singer and harmonica player. He was the first to use the name Sonny Boy Williamson. Born near Jackson, Tennessee in 1914, he taught himself to play the harmonica. By his late teens was playing with the likes of Big Joe Williams and Robert Nighthawk. In 1934, he moved to Chicago and established himself to the point that his harmonica-led group format became the norm. He signed with the Bluebird label where he wrote and recorded some of his greatest songs from 1937 to 1945. A blues classic and his first commercial recording, "Good Morning, Little School Girl," has been covered by artists, such as The Yardbirds, Canned Heat, and The Grateful Dead. He was killed in 1948 in Chicago and, as he often sang, buried "way down in Jackson, Tennessee."



Frank Ballard
The Frank Reynolds Band

Tenor Frank Ballard and The Phillip Reynolds Band were well-known throughout the South. They recorded an album, *Rhythm Blues Party*, in 1962 at Sun Records studio. The album was released again in 1985 in the United Kingdom. Born Franklin L. Ballard in 1934, he graduated from Lane College and Memphis State University. He had a lifelong love of singing and first used his gift on the sidewalks of Jackson, then at North Jackson Elementary School and throughout his life. He sang professionally with jazz saxophonist Curtis Amy and his band visiting 13 states. However, he is best known as the featured vocalist of the Phillip Reynolds Band which performed throughout the South. In 1962, Frank Ballard and the Phillips Reynolds Band recorded a hit album, *Rhythm Blues Party* at Sun Studio. The son of attorney Emmitt Ballard, Frank was a county magistrate and the first black official elected countywide in

Madison County. Also a science teacher, he was sworn in his classroom at North Side High School. He was also a photographer. He passed away in 1988.



Phillip Reynolds Musician, Teacher, and Band Leader

Born in McKenzie, Tenn. in 1933, Phillip Reynolds moved to Jackson at the age of seven. He attended North Jackson Elementary and graduated from Merry High School in 1952. While a student at Lane College, he wrote the Lane College alma mater, "My Fair Lane." When a senior in 1956, he became the first band director at West High School and taught there for 32 years. He formed his first band known as Phillip Reynolds and the Faith while he was in high school. Later, the Phillip Reynolds Band came into fruition to give his students an opportunity for professional experience. He launched the music careers of many students including Kurl McKinney, Joseph McKinney, Grady Carter, and others. His friend Frank Ballard was his featured vocalist. Their album, Rhythm Blues Party was a big hit. However, because of his job and family obligations, they were unable to pursue opportunities to tour and take advantage of their success. Instead, the Phillip Reynolds Band was known as "the best" and the band of choice for gatherings, parties and events

throughout the South. Recorded at Sun Studios in Memphis, the album was released as part of the Phillips International label in 1985.