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Ben Mittman ^[3]

Benjamin (Ben) Mittman, an American photographer, computer scientist, retired professor of Computer Science and Information Systems at [Northwestern University](#), and former director of *Northwestern's Vogelback Computing Center* ^[1]. In 1970 Ben Mittman and [Monty Newborn](#) initiated, constituted and organized the [ACM North American Computer Chess Championship](#), and together with [Monty Newborn](#) and [David Levy](#), the [World Computer Chess Championship](#) in 1974. Mittman was co-founder of the [ICCA](#) in 1977 and served as its first president, as well as editor of the [ICCA Newsletter](#) until 1983 ^[2].

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Photos



Tournament organizers [Monty Newborn](#) and Ben Mittman (front) with ACM president [Sam Matsa](#) and [David Slate](#). [Larry Atkin](#) looks on. [ACM 1970](#) ^[4].



Mittman at [2nd ACM North American Computer Chess Championship](#) ^[5]

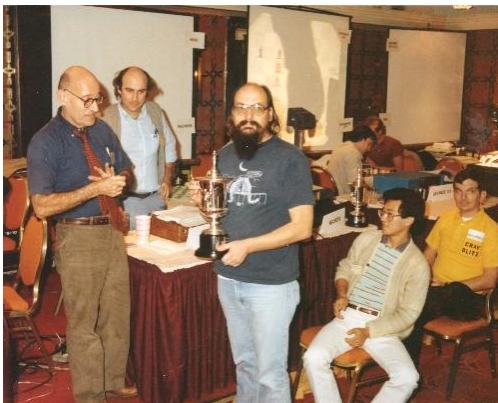


Chess pioneers in [Sacher Hotel Vienna](#), Austria 1980: [Ben Mittman](#), [Monty Newborn](#), [Tony Marsland](#), [Dave Slate](#), [David Levy](#), [Claude Shannon](#),

[Ken Thompson](#), Betty Shannon, [Tom Truscott](#) ^[6]



Ben Mittman and [Claude Shannon](#), [Swiss Army knives](#) ^[7]



Mittman, [Newborn](#), [Thompson](#) and [Hyatt](#) (right) at [ACM 1982](#) in Dallas, Texas, 1982 ^[8]

Quotes

Restoration of Pont Neuf

Quote from [The Pont Neuf](#) - *Appendix/Biography* ^[9] ^[10] :

Ben Mittman is a retired professor of computer science and information systems at Northwestern University and former director of Northwestern's Vogelback Computing Center. His interest in black and white photography began some fifty years ago while living in [Paris](#). Ben and his wife, [Barbara](#), currently spend half the year in Paris where he continues his photographic activities. ^[11]

Mittman's latest project, which began in 1994, is photographing the restoration of the Pont Neuf, the oldest bridge in Paris. The restoration, which was completed at the end of April 2007, is the subject of an exhibit of his photos to be held in the [Mairie \(Town Hall\) of the 6th arrondissement](#) of Paris in October-November of 2007.

Jim Schuyler

Quote by "[Sky](#)" [Jim Schuyler](#) September 24, 2007 ^[12] :

Ben Mittman, my dissertation advisor and mentor from Northwestern University (from whence my PhD degree) has been living half of each year in Paris since he took an early retirement, and has been chronicling the restoration of the Pont Neuf (the "new bridge") which was completed in 1607. The Northwestern University Library has a special section on its web site that describes the bridge and the project.

Ben has created this record of the restoration process using only black & white film. A rarity these days, but one that I think is in keeping with the spirit of this 400-year-old construction. He began his project in 1994 and the restoration was completed in April 2007.

There's a lot of history at this web site, but the photograph collection is particularly notable. And one of the most interesting parts of the restoration is the resculpting of over half of the 384 [mascarons](#) (faces or masks) that adorn the sides of the bridge.

I can't say enough about what Ben's support of my work and that of other students meant to us at the Vogelback Computing Center of Northwestern in the 1960s and 1970s. The luxury of having essentially unlimited computing time available - and then when I was on staff of having almost unlimited access to the supercomputer after midnight every night - was what allowed a select group of us to make progress on projects that otherwise would have never happened! Without this,

[Atkin](#), [Gorlen](#) and [Slate](#) would never have written [Chess 1.0](#) which became the first world champion chess-playing program. And I would never have gotten Northwestern into computer-aided-instruction (otherwise known as e-learning) and computer conferencing. Thanks, Ben! [\[13\]](#)

Jaap van den Herik

Quote by [Jaap van den Herik](#), 2007 [\[14\]](#) :

In 1978 Ben Mittman and [Barend Swets](#) started the [ICCA Newsletter](#). It was specialized on chess. Owing to the series of [Advances in Computer Chess Conferences](#), which in 1999 changed to [Advances in Computer Games Conferences](#), the ICCA Journal broadened its scope, too, and published articles on other games. This can be seen as a generalization. As a direct consequence, the Journal was renamed into [ICGA Journal](#).

David Levy

[David Levy](#) on Ben Mittman's photo exhibition in [Paris](#), November 23rd, 2007 [\[15\]](#) :

The City of Paris undertook a major project starting in the mid-1990s to totally restore the oldest bridge in Paris, the Pont Neuf. The restoration ended this year, coinciding with the 400th anniversary of the bridge's completion in 1607. During the entire period of the restoration, Ben Mittman documented the work in black and white photography.

There are thirty-four bridges that cross the Seine in Paris. They consist of the usual road and sidewalk variety, as well as five foot bridges, two viaducts for the metro, and two auto-route crossings. In 1988, the City of Paris took over ownership of the bridges from the State, and embarked on a multi-year renovation plan that included the complete restoration of the Pont Neuf – a project that would take almost fifteen years to complete.

The Pont Neuf was in very bad shape, having had its previous major restoration in the mid-19th century. The photo below shows what the blacked and broken stonework looked like in 1994, when scaffolding was erected on the first arch of the petit bras.

Ben's photo exhibition is at the [Mairie in the 6th arrondissement](#), just

a few minutes walk from our hotel in Rue Jacob, and ends tomorrow after a run of almost six weeks. A few hours after we arrived at [Gare du Nord](#) we had the pleasure of being shown around the exhibition by Ben himself, followed by drinks and a great dinner with the Mittmans. There is definitely something to be said for [hedonism](#).

Selected Publications

[\[16\]](#) [\[17\]](#)

- [Ben Mittman](#) (1971). *Computer Chess Programs (Panel)*. [pdf](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#) » [ACM 1971](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#), [Monty Newborn](#) (1973). [Results of the fourth annual U.S. computer chess tournament](#). [ACM SIGART Bulletin](#), No. 42 » [ACM 1973](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1977). *A Brief History of Computer Chess Tournaments: 1970-1975*. [Chess Skill in Man and Machine](#) (Ed. [Peter W. Frey](#)), pp. 1-33.
- [David Slate](#), [Ben Mittman](#) (1978). *Chess 4.6 - Where Do We Go From Here?* [Jerusalem Conference on Information Technology 1978](#) 193-198 » [Chess 4.6](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#), [Monroe Newborn](#) (1980). *Computer chess at ACM 79: the tournament and the man vs. man and machine match*. [Communications of the ACM](#), Vol. 23, Issue 1, [pdf](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#) » [ACM 1979](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1980). [\\$100,000 Prize Established](#). [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 3, No. 1
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1980). *3rd World Computer Chess Championship*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 3, No. 2, Special Issue » [WCCC 1980](#)
- [David Levy](#), [Ben Mittman](#), [Monroe Newborn](#) (1980). *3rd World Computer Chess Championship*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 3, No. 3 » [WCCC 1980](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1980). *The Eleventh ACM's North American Computer Chess Championship*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 3, No. 3 » [ACM 1980](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1981). [Dr. Edward Lasker, 1885-1981](#). [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 4, No. 1
- [Ben Mittman](#), [Ken Thompson](#) (1981). *Second World Microcomputer Chess Championship, Travemünde and Hamburg, West Germany*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 4, No. 2 » [WMCCC 1981](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1981). *Second World Microcomputer Chess Championship, Travemünde and Hamburg, West Germany - Opening Address*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 4, No. 2
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1981). *Twelfth ACM North American Computer Chess Championship*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 4, No. 3 » [ACM 1981](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#), [Tony Marsland](#), [Monroe Newborn](#), [Kathe Spracklen](#), [Ken Thompson](#) (1981). [Computer chess: Master level play in 1981?](#) ACM 81: Proceedings of the ACM '81 conference
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1983). *ACM's Thirteenth North American Computer Chess Championship*. [ICCA Newsletter](#), Vol. 6, No. 1 » [ACM 1982](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1983). *Computer chess panel*. ACM 83: Proceedings of the 1983 annual conference on Computers : Extending the human resource
- [Ben Mittman](#), [László Lindner](#) (1983). *Third World Microcomputer Chess Championship*. [ICCA](#)

[Journal, Vol. 6, No. 4](#) » [WMCCC 1983](#)

- [Ben Mittman](#), [László Lindner](#) (1984). *Third World Microcomputer Chess Championship* (continued). [ICCA Journal, Vol. 7, No. 1](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (1989). *Deep Preparation*. [ICCA Journal, Vol 12., No. 4](#) » [ACM 1989](#)
- [Ben Mittman](#) (2001). [OBITUARY CLAUDE SHANNON \(1916 – 2001\): PERSONAL MEMORIES](#). [ICGA Journal, Vol. 24, No. 2](#) ^[18]

External Links

- [Faces & Places: Photographs by Ben Mittman](#)
- [Search Mittman](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#)
- [archive.computerhistory.org - /resources/still-image/Mittman-Benjamin](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#)
- [Media Page: B. Mittman](#)

References

1. [^ History of Northwestern University from Wikipedia](#)
2. [^ The Fourth World Computer Chess Championship](#) New York, New York October 22-25, 1983 A Special Event at ACM-83. *The ICCA* pp 19. available as [pdf reprint](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#) (via the wrong labeled site [The 22nd ACM International Computer Chess Championship](#))
3. [^ Faces & Places: Photographs by Ben Mittman - 1955 - 2009 - About the Photographer](#)
4. [^ Newborn, Matsa, Slate, Atkin, and Mittman at the 1st North American Computer Chess Championship, New York City, New York, Gift of Monroe Newborn from The Computer History Museum](#)
5. [^ Mittman at 2nd ACM North American Computer Chess Championship in Chicago, Illinois by Monroe Newborn from The Computer History Museum](#)
6. [^ Chess pioneers in Sacher Hotel Vienna, Austria, Gift of Benjamin Mittman, The Computer History Museum](#)
7. [^ archive.computerhistory.org - /resources/still-image/Mittman-Benjamin](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#)
8. [^ Photo](#) from [The Computer History Museum](#)
9. [^ The Pont Neuf, Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University](#) (cache)
10. [^ Restoration of the Pont Neuf \(1994 - 2007\)](#)
11. [^ Barbara Mittman - About the Artist](#)
12. [^ The “New Bridge” of Paris gets a Facelift](#), September 24, 2007 [Sky's Blog - Spreading the word in a networked world](#)
13. [^ Robert Johansen and James A. Schuyler \(1983\). Computerized Conferencing in an Educational System: A Short-Range Scenario. pdf](#)
14. [^ Jaap van den Herik \(2007\). Editorial of ICGA Journal Vol. 30, No. 1 - March 2007](#)
15. [^ Ben Mittman and the Pont Neuf](#) by [David Levy](#) from [Powell's Blog](#), November 23rd, 2007
16. [^ Benjamin Mittman - ACM author profile page](#)
17. [^ DBLP: Benjamin Mittman](#)
18. [^ Claude Shannon article written by Ben Mittman](#)

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