

museum musings

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Ornaments Abound at the Museum

Add to your Christmas tree decorations with a wonderful afternoon of family fun at the museum on Saturday, December 8th! Everyone is invited to make a really cool ornament to take home; you can also enjoy hot cider and cookies. The event is free. While you are here, learn about the history of the holidays; correctly answer a trivia question about the origins of Christmas, Santa, mistletoe and more, and receive a 10% discount to a shop in downtown Belton.

Also, please note that our courthouse replica ornaments are now in! These make great stocking stuffers for one and all. This unique collectible sells for \$15.00 plus tax; of course, museum members get a 10% discount on all items in the museum store. Collect them all: First Baptist Church of Temple; Salado United Methodist Church; St. John Lutheran Church in Bartlett; Christ Episcopal Church in Temple; First United Methodist Church in Belton; First United Methodist Church in Temple; and Belton's historic Carnegie Library Building in Belton.

Ferguson Ball Gown Receives Conservation Treatment



Miriam A. Ferguson, 1915. Courtesy of Lena Armstrong Public Library.

"Mamma's gown for the ball was of soft, white satin, trimmed with real lace and seed pearls. In those days Mamma was wealthy in her own name, and she had not spared her purse for the event." Ouida Ferguson Nalle, *The Fergusons of Texas*

The beautiful cream silk gown worn by Miriam Amanda Wallace Ferguson to her husband's (Gov. James E. Ferguson) inaugural ball in 1915 is currently undergoing some needed conservation treatment. The gown was designed by Madame Grunder of Louisville, Kentucky. Although Ouida Ferguson Nalle maintains that the gown included seed pearls, we've not seen any; instead, the gown is replete with bugle beads.

As with all textiles, the years have taken their toll on the historic dress. The satin is beginning to shred, there are losses in the tulle netting and discoloration is evident in many areas. Textile Preservation Services of Texas is completing the needed work.

Funding for the project is made possible through the Friends of the Museum, the Bell County Museum Association, Inc., and through Ed and Mary Jo Franklin.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Christmas at Messer Ranch will be held on December 15th. The contemporary home of Bill & Ann Messer successfully represents an indigenous ranch-style Texas home of the 1850s. Facing north-northwest to catch prevailing southeast breezes, and complete with an enclosed dogtrot entry, the Messers have carefully adapted design elements common in the period and style, but to meet 20th century needs. Thorough research of extant Texas structures of the pre-Civil War era has resulted in accurate building dimensions and details, such as porch depths, roof pitch and window size. The furnishings in the home include family pieces, those with the Lone Star Motif ★, and those based upon photographs of 1850s Texas furniture.

Christmas at Messer Ranch is a major fundraiser for the museum. Proceeds help to fund conservation and preservation, as well as educational programs and exhibitions. The museum expresses grateful appreciation to Ann and Bill for opening up their fascinating home for this holiday occasion.

AILEY II IS COMING TO TEMPLE on Sunday, January 20, 2008, at the Cultural Activities Center (CAC) in Temple. Formerly known as the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, the dance troupe was founded by dancer-choreographer Alvin Ailey, Jr., a Rogers, Bell County, Texas, native. Growing up in Texas during the Great Depression, Ailey drew upon his childhood experiences to create modern dance masterpieces which identified the southern black experience. The themes present in his ballets—the joys, sorrows, and hopes of southern blacks—propelled the southern black experience into the traditionally elite world of modern dance. These ballets, however, transcended race through their universal appeal to the human experience and to human dignity. Ailey was a recipient of the U.N. Peace Medal, the Spingarn Medal, and was a Kennedy Center Honor recipient. We are proud to partner with the CAC on this project!

Texas Archeology Month (October) is always fun and fascinating for budding archeologists, who explore the museum's archeology pits.



Honoraria

Dorothy Ann Aldrich
by

Pat Jarma & Ruth Mikeska, Judy & Ken Maggard,
Helen & Jerry Pickle

Dorothy Ann Aldrich – Chisholm Trail Monument
by

Ann & Robert Barkemeyer
Daniel Aldrich Dunn
Katy & David Kummerfeld
Aaron Aldrich Maggard
Lauren & Scott Maggard
Amy & Lloyd Thomas
Margaret Cox Thomas

Curtis Younts, Sr.
by Karen Barton Lane

A Staff Addition **A Staff Addition**

We are so pleased to welcome Kristen Williams as our new Program Coordinator. Kristen replaces Adrienne Lilley, who returned to Sulphur Springs with her family. Kristen obtained her master's degree in museum science from Texas Tech University, and also holds a BA in classics from Tech. Her experience includes work at the Grace Museum in Abilene, the Museum of Texas Tech University, and the Buddy Holly Center. We look forward to her leadership in our educational programs.

Please join us! Take part in preserving the rich history of the Bell County region by joining the Friends of the Museum Association. Your membership allows us to continue award-winning programming through exhibits and educational activities that enhance our county-wide community. Benefits of membership include discounts in the museum bookstore, invitations to special events, and the satisfaction of knowing that YOU are an important part of the preservation of Bell County and Central Texas history. *Together, we make our community great!*

Yes! I want to support the Bell County Museum by becoming a member of the Friends of the Museum Association.

- \$10 Student
- \$25 Friend
- \$50 Family
- \$75 Advocate
- \$100 Patron
- \$250 Partner
- \$500 Associate
- \$1000+ Benefactor

THANK YOU
to our
New & Renewing
Friends

Student:
Marie Elbert
Deborah Reagan

Friend:
Gene Deutscher
Linda & Dr. Bill Frick
Col. (Ret.) Luciana Jarma
Juanita Jones
Denise Karimkhani
Louise McDonald
Kathleen Midkiff
Mr. & Mrs. Doyle Ray
Jerry Vitek
Penny & Hal Ward

Family:
Hon. & Mrs. Gerald Brown
Judy & Don Cast
Dr. & Mrs. Nicholas Christoff
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Cronin
Ken Gober & Denise Ripley
Dottie Jones
Karen & Sam Listi
Doreen & Kent Mundell
Mary Nell & Joe Pirtle
Mary Schlieker
Sherry & Jim Sewell
Joan & Jack Schrock
Dave & Marti Spriggs
Cdr. (Ret.) & Mrs. Leon Wald
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Drs. Vivian & Dudley Baker
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Sara Mackie
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Paula & Rick Miller
Mary Ann Morton
Barbara & John Robertson
Mr. & Mrs. Reuben Talasek

Partner:
Marion & Bill Brakebill
Mr. & Mrs. Keifer Marshall, Jr.

Associate:
Mickey & Bob Burleson
Dean Chandler & Gail Peek

Benefactor:
Mary Jo & Ed Franklin

MEMORIA

In memory of:

Lila Barge
by Mary & Frank Cannon

Charles Barrier
by
Barbara & Raymond Carver
Margaret & Mike Williamson

Wayne Bayless
by Barbara & Raymond Carver

Bill Childers
by Ann & Dennis Turk

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Dannelley
by Thomas Dannelley

Clara Darden
by Mary Lapwing

David Garcia
by Richard & Peggy Dillard

Anne Kelly
by Margaret & Mike Williamson

Peggy Barton Means
by
Janelle & Joe Baisden
Cleo & Mary Bay
Mary Jean & Paul Boston
Barbara & Raymond Carver
Gerald & Flo Clanton
Pat & Richard Dale
Dorothy & Don Dowling
Camilla & Don Gidden
Benny & Irma Jarratt
Libby & Clyde Jones
Bettye & Bob Kennedy
Mr. & Mrs. E.A. Limmer, Jr.
Kathy & Griff Lord
Hon. & Mrs. Clifton Peters
Bill & Shirley Pinkston
Mary Nell & Joe Pirtle
Joan & Jack Schrock
Dennis & Ann Turk
Margaret & Mike Williamson

Barbara Smitha
by Stephanie Turnham

Kathryn Tyson
by Barbara & Raymond Carver

Frances Northen Young
by Wanda Weinblatt