

# museum musings

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*The Chisholm Trail . . . initiated the greatest, the most extraordinary, the most stupendous, the most fantastic and fabulous migration of animals controlled by man that the world has ever known or can ever know. —J. Frank Dobie, The Longhorns*



The  
BELL COUNTY MUSEUM  
is pleased to invite you to the unveiling of

*Up the Chisholm Trail*

by Sculptor Troy Kelley

Saturday, 5 April 2008  
10:00 a.m.

in the courtyard of the museum  
201 N. Main Street, Belton, Texas

## The Sanctified Sisters: The Rest of the Story

Forensic genealogist Kelvin Meyers will present a fascinating program on the Belton Woman's Commonwealth (a.k.a. the Sanctified Sisters of Belton) on Monday, March 24, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Bell County Courthouse. The lecture, sponsored by the museum and the Bell County Historical Commission, is free and open to the public.

The Sanctified Sisters is a phrase used by Beltonians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to refer to a group of women who banded together to form a commune, founded by Martha McWhirter in 1867. The women believed in nondenominationalism, celibacy, dream interpretation, and communal living. From the 1860s to the early 1900s, the women established a successful laundry business and three hotels.

In the turbulent years of the commune's inception, the Sisters endured hostility from the townspeople in the form of public trials for divorce and insanity, physical violence and separation from family and friends. In spite of early disapproval, however, the Sisters were so successful in their business pursuits, that when dreams told them to leave Belton for Washington D.C., the town was sorry to see them go.

Kelvin Meyers is a popular speaker to many genealogical societies and family associations throughout Texas. A graduate of Texas Tech University, Kelvin was a staff member of the Dallas Public Library Genealogy Section for ten years. He attended the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research of Samford University, studying Advanced Methodology and Library Research. He contracts with attorneys, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services, and heir-researching companies as a forensic genealogist, locating missing or unknown heirs to estates or oil and gas royalties.

## BIG BELL COUNTY GARAGE SALE UPDATE

Although all of the expenses are not yet in, we anticipate that the Big Bell County Garage Sale cleared about \$12,000! Around 7,000 people came out to the sale on March 8th and discovered treasures galore from among the 90 vendors present.

*We appreciate the following folks who helped us with this important fundraiser:*

Dorothy Ann Aldrich; Bill & Connie Blowers; Paul Boston; Joe & Dorothy Button; Madelon Carroll; David Casto; Bill Clark; Maryette Clifton; JoAn & Doug Dillard; Charlotte Douglass; Jeannette Kelley; Sue Mayborn; Claudia & Randy Nuñez; John Odom; David O'Neal; Joe Oliver; Ken Peel; and Helen Pickle.

The Garage Sale is a major benefit for the museum; it helps to provide funding for programs and exhibitions.

### Speaking of Programs . . .

Summer is just around the corner, and so is our youth camp! The camp will be held July 22 – 25, 2008, from 9 a.m. until noon, and is for youth ages 8-12. The fun camp will focus on pioneers, archeology, Native Americans and the Chisholm Trail. Cost is only \$30. For more information or to register a child, please call Kristen Williams, program coordinator, at 254.933.5741.

### *Love, Bell County Style*

Belton, Texas Apr. 2, 1901

Miss Edna Spencer  
Temple, Tex.

Dear Friend:

Have for some time been thinking of presuming upon your good nature enough to ask you to allow me to come into your circle of correspondence.

I of course do not hope to either instruct, elevate, or even interest you to any great amount but did hope that knowing you would do all of these for me, would you grant me the exquisite pleasure of reading from your pen. If you think this not too great a burden upon you would be glad to hear from you soon.

Your friend  
Angus Vick

Temple, Texas  
April 4, 1901

Mr. Angus Vick  
Belton, Texas

Dear Friend:

Was somewhat surprised when I saw the Belton Post Mark on my letter but was surprised indeed when read to the close to see your name inscribed, though a pleasant one.

I am sure the correspondence will be pleasant and agreeable to me, though you will find me a rather dull correspondent I fear for that is one thing I am not gifted with, letter writing along with my numerous short comings. However if you will take into consideration my surrounding and find pleasure in reading my letters, I am sure it will be agreeable on my part.

Your True Friend  
Edna Spencer

*These letters and many more were donated to the museum by Angus and Edna's grandson, Ed Franklin. Edna's wedding dress can be seen in the "Will You Be Mine?" exhibit through July 26, 2008.*

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.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Patron       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Friend   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Partner      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Associate    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Advocate | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000+ Benefactor |

**THANK YOU**  
to our  
*New & Renewing*  
*Friends*

**Friend:**  
Joe & Nora Guthrie  
Ruth Howe  
Tom Normand  
Violet Okeson  
Jack & Miriam Oliver  
Berneta Peebles

**Family:**  
David & Stephanie Benoit  
Paul & Eva Marie Dyke  
Carol Macaulay  
Joe & Dottie Oliver  
Ken Peel  
Sunny Wilson

**Patron:**  
Dr. David & Sydney Havemann

**Partner:**  
Woman's Wednesday Club

**Benefactor:**  
Carol Mouché & Dr. Barbara Pollock

**MEMORIA**

In memory of:

*June Alston*  
by Ken Peel

*Harry & Mabel Blair*  
by Mary Lapwing

*U.B. Bond*  
by Stephanie Turnham

*Lester Coates*  
by Jim & Sharon James

*Nina Fuller*  
by Sharon Leiker  
Ken Peel

*Dr. Jack & Wanda Weinblatt*  
*Drs. David & Donnie Yellding*

*Thomas Lapwing*  
by Mary Lapwing

*B.J. McConnell*  
by Paul & Mary Jean Boston  
Vic Means  
Stephanie Turnham

*Sterling McLane*  
by Jim & Sharon James

*Ben Parnell*  
by Paul & Mary Jean Boston

*Clark Potter*  
by Don & Camilla Gidden  
Vic Means

*Charles Pyle*  
by Mrs. Frank Walker

*Gladyne McLane Reed*  
by Jim & Sharon James

*Juanita Sims*  
by Jim & Sharon James

*Katherine Wende*  
by Dr. Raymond & Barbara Carver

*Honoraria*  
Raye Virginia Allen  
&  
Betty Jean & Bill Cloud  
by Mrs. Frank Walker



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 Kristen Williams.....Program Coordinator  
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 Sarah Nuñez.....UMHB Work-Study Student

**¿Qué Pasa?**

Now on view . . . *Varied Visions: 5 Area Fine Art Photographers*, organized by the Public Arts League of Salado

Now on view through July 26, 2008 - *Will You Be Mine? A Guide to Weddings and Other Romantic Traditions*

March 24, 2008 - Kelvin Meyers, *The Sanctified Sisters: The Rest of the Story*, Bell County Courthouse, 7:00 p.m.

March 29, 2008 - Girl Scout archeology event

April 5, 2008 - Unveiling of *Up the Chisholm Trail* by Sculptor Troy Kelley, at 10:00 a.m. in the museum courtyard

April 26 - Kiwanis Fun Day with Tom Taylor