

Newsletter

Fall Issue 2003

COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE OF THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

Workshop Overview

Is It Real Or Is It Faux?

Having Fun With Fake Food

by Trey Reed

On July 21st The George Ranch Historical Park hosted the Collection Managers Committee Workshop: Is It Real Or Is It Faux Fake Food Workshop. After almost having to cancel the Workshop, Jana Smith, Director of the Rosenberg Railroad Museum and Bitsy Barr, former Education and Site Director of the Fort Bend County Museum Association, graciously accepted my plea for help.

Twelve people attended the workshop, which was held at the park's collection storage facility. Half of the workshop was spent with Bitsy who demonstrated melting wax and adding color from crayons to make milk, gravy, chocolate candy

and a grape mold. She also showed the group how to make mini coconut layer cakes. The other half of the workshop was spent with Jana. She showed the group how to use Crayola Model Magic and Styrofoam to make bon bon's and petit fours. I demonstrated making pies using Bitsy's fake pie recipe, which was an option for anyone who wanted to stay after the workshop.

Jana also contacted Iwasaki Images, who sent a catalog and a slice of fake bread for everyone who attended. Everyone seemed to have a great time and got to take home everything that they made.

2004 CMC Travel Stipends Application Guidelines

The Collection Managers Committee of the Texas Association of Museums (CMC of TAM) is sponsoring several annual meeting travel stipends made possible through the support of CMC by workshop attendees and members. These stipends will assist collection managers in attending the Texas Association of Museums Annual Meeting in

Waco, March 30 – April 2, 2004. The stipend awards are not automatic and may be withheld if there are no qualified applicants.

Applicants for these stipends must be current voting members of CMC who reside in the United States. (CMC membership information may
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FROM THE CHAIR

Due to the crazy busy lives we all seem to live in 2003, we're a little delayed in getting this newsletter out to you all. Since our last newsletter we've had two great workshops: George Ranch hosted a Fake Food workshop back in July, and in October about 20 of us gathered at the Amon Carter Museum for a workshop on the Care and Preservation of Photography Collections. Due to limited space at the Carter, we had to limit attendance for the October workshop. However, we are looking into putting it on the workshop schedule again next year since there was such a high-level of interest. We'll keep you posted.

This past summer we had to say goodbye to CMC Secretary Catherine Campbell. She continues on as a member, but in her new life as a consultant she is no longer eligible to serve as an officer. Trey Reed graciously agreed to step into the Secretary position, and the CMC Board appointed Kim Cupit (from the Denton County Courthouse Museum) to finish out Trey's term as Officer-at-Large. Welcome, Kim!

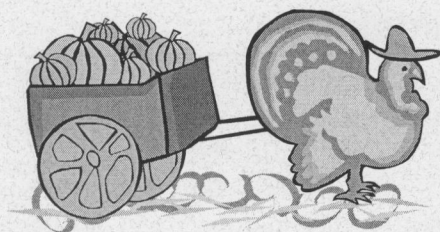
We are fast approaching the TAM Annual Meeting – which means it's time for various "housekeeping" activities: CMC officer nominations and Annual Meeting Travel Stipend applications. Details on both appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

We're also in the planning stages for the CMC calendar for 2004-2005. If there are any particular topics you would like to see presented as a workshop – please let us know. If you want to volunteer to host and/or organize a workshop – please let us know. To make it easier to let us know, I'm going to put our e-mail addresses right here in front of your eyes:

Me – meganb@jfk.org
Carolyn – cspears@sfasu.edu
Rebecca – rebeccahuffstutler@wittemuseum.org
Trey – treyreed@intertext.net
Jennifer – jennifer.cook@mkcorp.com
Kim – kim.cupit@dentoncounty.com

I look forward to hearing from you!

Megan Bryant, Chair



2003-2004 CMC OFFICERS

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CMC Newsletter

is a quarterly publication of the Collection Managers Committee, a non-profit affinity group of the Texas Association of Museums. Submissions are due to the Editor by the first of March, May, August and November.

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It is time once again for new leadership on the CMC Board. Anyone interested in being an officer can submit him or herself or make suggestions for nominations for the following positions:

Chair -- Treasurer -- Officer-at-Large

Each is a two-year term from 2004 through 2006.

Please send nominations to:

**Gabriela Truly
CMC Nominating Committee
Dallas Museum of Art
1717 N. Harwood
Dallas, TX 75201
214/922-1267 (ph)
214/969-5913 (fx)
gtruly@dm-art.org**

2004 CMC Travel Stipends

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be obtained from Rebecca Huffstutler at 210-357-1867 or any other member of the CMC Board). Eligible to apply are registrars, associate and assistant registrars, collection managers, and museum staff members whose work is registrarial or otherwise collections-based in nature. Each award winner will receive money to defray the costs associated with attending the TAM Annual Meeting. In return, each recipient will be required to provide a report on one or two of the TAM sessions for the CMC Newsletter.

The CMC Board will select the stipend recipients on the basis of the applicants' demonstrated merit and financial need. Demonstrated merit includes, but is not limited to, such activities as participating in professional museum organizations at the state, regional, or national level; presenting sessions at meetings of

professional organizations; and publishing articles in professional journals.

To apply for the stipend, complete the form on the reverse and submit, along with the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Letter of recommendation from your immediate supervisor

Applications must be received by January 30, 2004. Faxed applications are acceptable, but be sure to mail the original. Send applications to:

Trey Reed
Fort Bend Museum Association
10215-G FM 762
Richmond, TX 77469
281 656-9223 (phone)
281 343-5060 (fax)
treyreed@intertex.net

CMC

Collection Managers Committee

2003 CMC Travel Stipend for TAM Annual Meeting

Application Form

Applicant's Name: _____ Title: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Professional Affiliations and Activities: _____

Explanation of Financial Need: _____

How will information gained at meeting be shared with others?: _____

PLEASE TYPE FORM. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NEEDED

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

I was born and raised in Austin, Texas. I am a fifth generation Texan and one-sixteenth Cherokee, but my great-great grandmother married a Birdsong, so the name is not Native American, but possibly a translation from German or French immigrants.

During my school years in Austin (grades 1-12), I won awards for art, music, and science. My favorite media are still pastel, pen-and-ink, and colored pencil. I played flute in both concert and marching band. And the special place I always wanted to go for my birthday was the Texas Museum – I especially loved the dioramas. I also usually had a small zoo of my own: dogs, birds, turtles, chickens, hamsters, lizards, etc.

I was accepted into the University of Texas at Austin as a pre-pharmacy major but transferred to the University of Texas at Arlington when my family moved to Bedford, halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth. I changed my major to pre-med biochemistry, then finally to medical technology. I was also doing commissioned animal portraits in pastel and still occasionally exhibiting and winning awards for my work.

I graduated with a degree in Medical Technology (biology major/chemistry minor) from UT Arlington and began work as a registered medical technologist. I worked in industry, research, reference, but mostly hospital clinical laboratories in Dallas, Fort Worth and Bedford for over 16 years. In the meantime, I decided to become a docent at the Fort Worth Zoological Park. With their encouragement, I went back to school to see if I could find a career which incorporated my artistic skills with my interests in museums without totally giving up science.

So, I went back to the University of Texas at Arlington and enrolled as an Art History major with a minor in Fine Arts. I did an internship at the Amon Carter in Fort Worth in the photography collection -- cleaning, rehousing, and cataloging an old glass negative collection. Still working full time at the hospital, it took three years to get my BA in Art History, but UTA allowed me to use my previous

science classes as my electives (this has to be the strangest Art History degree ever!)

Even though I was interviewed for the Winterthur Conservation Program, I was accepted at the University of Southern California as a full Fellow in the Art History/Museum Studies Program. Being at the top of my class enabled me to get a grant so I could study at the Winterthur Museum and Library (Delaware) as a Visiting Scholar to do research on my thesis: searching for the printed design sources of

American neo-grec furniture. I spent my internship at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art with Leslie G. Bowman (currently C.E.O./Director at Winterthur) in Decorative Arts. Through her mentoring I began to realize the possibility of a museum career in an historic house.

I was able to land a job as Assistant Curator/Registrar (later Collections Manager) at the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum in the City of Industry, California (25 miles east of Los Angeles). Everything I learned and did at the Homestead Museum prepared me in some way for my future job at the McFaddin-Ward House. I was even able to take some private lessons from different conservators in the areas of paper, textiles, paintings, and furniture.

Happily (being a Texan longing to come home), I was able to come back to Texas and find a place to work in one of the finest historic house sites in the country, the McFaddin-Ward House. Serving first as assistant curator/registrar for four years, then as a curator of collections for over three years, which gave me immense job satisfaction, especially since every skill and talent I have come into play when dealing with the challenges of an historic house. With the support of the MWH, I had the opportunity to grow professionally by attending conferences, presenting sessions at national and regional conferences, creating one of our own MWH conferences, doing MAP II evaluations, teaching docents, and giving public lectures about the decorative arts. Part of my job even allowed me to

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Sherri L. Birdsong

*AA; BS; BA; MA-Certificate in Museum Studies;
MT, ASCP: Renaissance Woman*

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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be artistic by making faux food and silk flowers arrangements for exhibits in the house

I balanced my museum life with my home-based business I do with my brother, making creative collar covers for pets. My current "children" include Katie-dog (black lab-cocker mix), Salem-cat (green-eyed, black domestic short-hair), and Lady-bird (pearled cockatiel). Our pro-

ducts are carried in a few dog bakeries and vet offices, plus we do about three dog shows/holiday markets per year.

In reviewing my life as a Renaissance Woman, I am so glad I finally figured out what I wanted to be when I grew up (before it was too late!) – an historic house curator!!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please Print Clearly

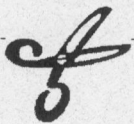
Name: _____ Institution: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code + 4: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Please make checks payable to the Collection Managers Committee.
Send check and form to Rebecca Huffstutler, The Witte Museum,
3801 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78209



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