

# McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE VIEWPOINTS

December 2021  
Vol. 38/ No. 1

## Christmas Dinner in Beaumont

**SPAM sparks quick 'n tasty holiday ideas**

**SPAM Sandwich**  
Cover lightly-toasted bread with sliced SPAM and slice of cheese. Broil 3 minutes. Top with slice of pickled cranberry; broil again briefly.

**SPAM Spread**  
Heat 1/2 cup SPAM in a pan over low heat. Add 1/2 cup butter, 1/2 cup cream cheese, and 1/2 cup cranberry. Blend until smooth. Top with sliced SPAM. Broil 3 minutes. Top with sliced SPAM. Broil 3 minutes. Top with sliced SPAM. Broil 3 minutes.

**No. 78907 - Cure/81 Ham registered and guaranteed by Hormel**

When the occasion demands perfection, choose the world's most widely perfect ham - so good each one is registered individually, marked as our Gold Medal Ham and given. Try this colorful holiday glaze.

**Cherry Cherry-Glaze:** Stir 1/4 cup of sugar into 1 cup cherry pie filling; heat. Spoon over ham; broil 1/2 hr. if baking. For flaming ham, heat 2 cups of brandy (or 1 cup brandy extract) pour over ham and light.

For more Cure-81 ideas, see the Holiday Hostess Recipe Book now in special packs of Gold Medal Flour.

This advertisement showed delicious ways to serve SPAM and SPAM Spread during food rationing in World War II.

By Judy Linsley

Holidays are often defined by their traditional menus. In the U.S., food preparation changed greatly in the first half of the 20th century, as stoves evolved from wood to gas and electric, and food variety and availability increased with better shipping and preservation methods. Even dining styles changed, from formal

sit-downs to buffets and cocktail parties. But food traditions between 1900-1950 seem to have been slower to change. In the early 1900s, Beaumonters were limited by what was locally available. Stores stocked fresh fruit and “exotic” nuts (meaning anything other than Texas pecans) only at Christmas. Oranges, in particular the Red Ball

variety or brand, arrived in Beaumont mid-December in a huge train boxcar. Back then, the aroma of oranges evoked Christmas, and children reaching into their stockings were nearly as excited to find them as they were a new baseball or a new doll. Ambrosia, a fruit cocktail made with oranges, apples, pineapple, nuts, and shredded coconut,

became a holiday tradition.

Turkeys had been considered the traditional bird for English Christmas dinners beginning with Henry VIII (1491-1547), and this custom carried over into Anglo-American cuisine. In early 20th-century Beaumont, however, the turkey market was uncertain. A 1903 *Beaumont Journal* article described the “heaviest demand and the poorest supply” in turkeys in years. In 1912, the *Journal* again reported turkeys “somewhat scarce” in Beaumont because shippers were “loath” to ship them before they knew what they would make. Some families raised their own turkeys, and Beaumont meat markets offered ducks and geese (both wild or domesticated) as alternatives to gobblers. As grocery store chains—A&P and Piggly Wiggly—came in, turkey supply and

prices stabilized. Ham was a popular alternative or an addition to turkey. During World War II meat rationing, SPAM stepped into the breach, offering tempting sandwiches of sliced toasted SPAM and cheese topped with cranberry jelly. American diners sighed and made the best of the situation. Dressing, which some sources say got its name because the word “stuffing” was too crude for Victorian sensibilities, remained a staple on most Beaumont tables, including the McFaddins’. Other new dishes appeared over time, however, especially desserts. In 1910, a *Beaumont Enterprise* article crowned the Lady Baltimore cake “The Most Popular Cake This Season.” Other trendy cakes in the early 20th Century were angel food and

## Director's Desk

# Enjoy the magic of the museum



The McFaddin-Ward House decorated for the holidays.

Dear Friends,

It's an understatement to say that 2021 at the McFaddin-Ward House has been a busy year. Clearly we've run the gamut from COVID-19 concerns to Christmas cheer!

Installing "air scrubbers" in the House, as well as ensuring the health of our visitors, volunteers, and staff consumed the first quarter of the year, along with securing renewal of the Museum's coveted Museum Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums.

The next priority was identifying a new Curator of Collections, Assistant Curator/Registrar, and Director of Educational Outreach. Happily,

Victoria Tamez, Julianne Haidusek, and Rayanna Hoeft, respectively, have filled those roles, joining Bel Morian, our remarkable Director of Public Programming, and Kara Timberlake, who likewise does a great job managing our communications and social media, as the new McFaddin-Ward House programming team.

Attention was next turned to hosting the Museum's first ever traveling exhibit – *Apron Strings – Ties to the Past* (which can still be seen through January 7, 2022 in the Carriage House), along with kicking off the 2021–2022 Lecture Series.

And finally, laying the groundwork

for future programming, the Museum hosted a History Open House for area educators, and completed installation of improvements making the beautiful gardens of the Museum accessible to visitors.

The holidays are a magical time at the McFaddin-Ward House, and we hope you will take the opportunity this month to visit the Museum with family and friends to enjoy the magnificent décor planned and executed by Victoria Tamez, Julianne Haidusek, Bel Morian, and Felix McFarland.

Tony L. Chauveaux

# Curator's Corner

## A Rip Roaring Yuletide

By **Victoria Tamez**  
*Curator of Collections*

Happy Holidays from the collections staff here at the McFaddin-Ward House! We are extremely excited to have you all come join us for our Holiday Open House. Our theme for this year is "A Rip Roaring Yuletide." We are taking you back to the 1920s with our swell holiday interpretation. Break out your long pearl necklaces and flapper dresses! We are pulling from our reserve collection to bring out a few pieces that embody the 1920s. Quite a few of these pieces have not been out on display in over ten years, and we will bring out a few more items than usual from our collection into the house for your enjoyment. We searched the collection to find our 1920s pieces, and we have discovered a few gems that we think you will enjoy.

One of our favorite pieces pulled out for the holiday exhibit is a beautiful pink flapper dress that we believe Mamie wore in the 1920s. This dress is covered in bright and hot pink beads in the shape of flowers with silver, gray, and black beads scattered throughout. While we adore this beautiful dress and cannot wait for you to see it, this dress presents a display challenge. The dress has heavy beading throughout and especially at the bottom. This beading weighs the dress down and if the dress is displayed in any sort of hanging position, it creates tension and stress on the shoulders. Close examination of the dress has shown that the shoulders already have tears and evidence of stress, thus we must display our dress in a way that does not require hanging

or places any stress on the shoulders. This flapper-esque dress will be displayed in a laying or draping position while it is in the house. However, we have snapped a photo for you to enjoy of the dress in a more proper display position.

Another of our favorite pieces has a hidden surprise. This object is a blush brush that has its own bejeweled container. At first glance, the object looks like a lipstick container. However, once the lid is opened, as it is in the photograph below, the bristles of the brush will come up when the bottom is turned. This blush brush is designed similar to a lipstick container, and we wanted to offer you a closer look at this interesting object.

To wrap up some of our favorite 1920s objects, I will conclude with a series of alcohol bottles from the 1920s. The 1920s was the time of Prohibition when the sale, transportation, and manufacture of alcohol was illegal in the United States. However, most people did not follow this law and many even made their own alcohol at home. We have found a few bottles with labels that note that they were bottled in the 1920s. These bottles will be on display throughout the house, so be sure to look out for them!

Again, we are thrilled to have everyone stop by for our Holiday Open House and we hope to see you there! On behalf of myself, Collections Assistant Julianne Haidusek, Museum Technicians, Mary Acclis and Michelle Janise, we wish you a happy holiday and a wonderful New Year!



Pink beaded flapper dress



Twistable blush brush



1920s bottles of alcohol

# DINNER

Continued from page 1

sponge.

In the early 20th Century, young housewives learned to bake cakes from Fannie Farmer's *Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*. Two copies of this famous publication are in the McFaddin-Ward House archives. Mrs. Farmer included cautionary hints: "If directions are followed this makes a most satisfactory cake; but if ingredients are added separately it will not prove a success."

Today we deride the notorious "Christmas fruitcake," but homemade fruitcake seems to have been the dessert of choice in the early 20th century. Beaumont Edna Swindell Crary made "really dark" fruitcakes, according to her daughter, Mary Anna Crary. "Raisins came looking like a bunch of grapes that had been flattened...and were still on the stem," she said. "We had to take them off and seed them and cut them up," along with citrons and currants. Once baked, the cakes were placed in large crocks and soaked in whiskey. "The front bedroom smelled like whiskey around Christmas."

Ida Caldwell McFaddin enjoyed baking fruitcakes. Albertine Parker, part-time cook for the McFaddins in the 1920s, recalled assisting her with fruitcake, and once, candy, though the candy met with disaster when several mice got stuck in it before it hardened.

Mamie, less frequently seen in the kitchen, nonetheless baked fruitcakes in 1923 when her mother was in Huntington, West Virginia. She didn't mention soaking them in whiskey, and Prohibition was in effect, but whiskey definitely went into the family's Christmas eggnog. Albertine recalled that her husband Tom, W.P.H. McFaddin's chauffeur,

brought the McFaddins' whiskey from the local bootlegger.

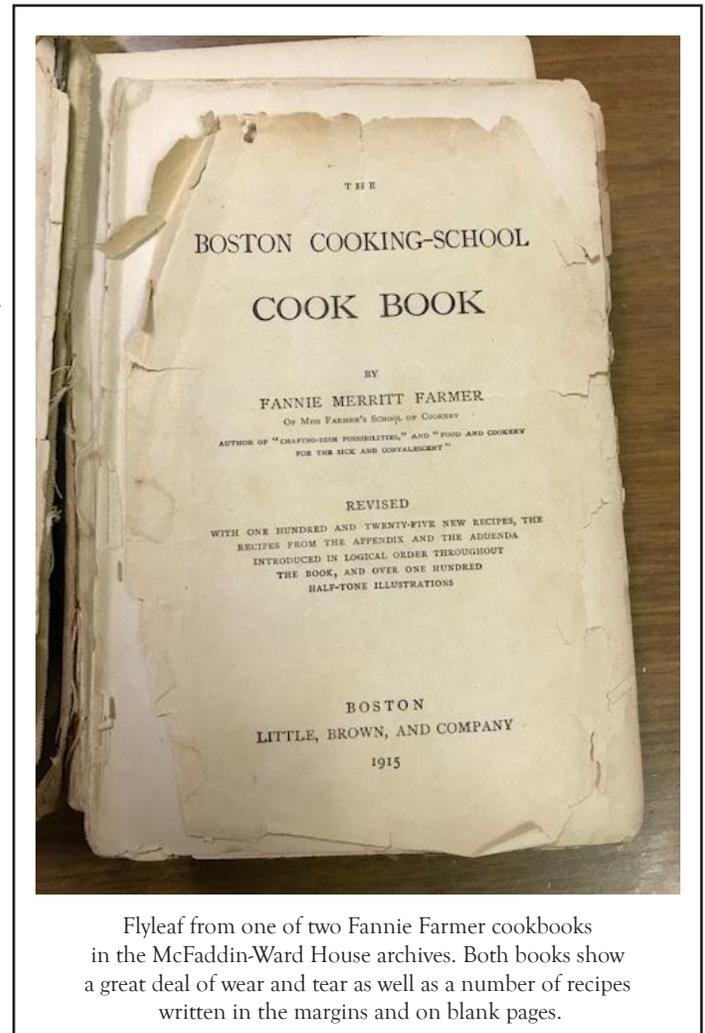
Cookie recipes proliferated in the early 20th century. The McFaddin-Ward House Museum cookbook, *Perfectly Splendid*, includes several popular varieties, including Hermits, Lizzies, Brownies, and icebox cookies. Gingerbread with lemon sauce was also a favorite McFaddin dessert.

Trends notwithstanding, Louis Lemon, cook for the McFaddin family from ca. 1923 until his death in 1952, had his own dessert list that included chocolate cake, ice cream (using cream from the McFaddin farm), and of course, his famous teacakes. The family would have been reluctant to change a good thing.

Some Beaumont families enjoyed a once-a-year feast at Christmas. Mildred Campbell Yates, lifelong Beaumont and former McFaddin-Ward House Docent, recalled Christmas dinner in the 1930s that would be, as she said, "simply unbelievable by today's standards." It was amazing by Depression standards, too, and Mildred was the first to admit that her family was fortunate. Everything was made from scratch, and preparations started right after Thanksgiving, with shelling and parching the pecans.

A Campbell family dinner included fruit cocktail, congealed salad, turkey, dressing, ham, macaroni and cheese, scalloped potatoes, cauliflower with Hollandaise sauce, English peas, candied yams, gravy, and Parker House rolls. Homemade jellies, pickles, spiced peaches, parched nuts, and cheese straws were "scattered up and down the table."

Dessert included fruitcake, cabinet pudding, and plum pudding with hard sauce, all popular at



Flyleaf from one of two Fannie Farmer cookbooks in the McFaddin-Ward House archives. Both books show a great deal of wear and tear as well as a number of recipes written in the margins and on blank pages.

that time. Cabinet pudding appears in *Perfectly Splendid*. A 1904 recipe for plum pudding in the *Enterprise* calls for one pound of grated bread, one and one quarter pounds of grated suet (hard animal fat), a pound each of raisins and brown sugar, and 12 eggs. The mixture is wrapped in a cloth and boiled for four hours—no wonder it only got served at Christmas.

While cooking methods and some ingredients changed, the Christmas menu for the McFaddins basically remained stable 1900-1950. In 1938, Mamie's diary provides

the menu for a holiday luncheon at the Beaumont Country Club for 41 guests: turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, yams, peas, rolls, chocolate parfait, copper nuts and mints.

Today, traditional turkey and dressing may still dominate Christmas meals in Southeast Texas, but other dishes are gaining momentum. With this area's increasingly diverse population come other delicious holiday foods and joyous celebrations. Imagine what a typical Christmas menu might look like ten years from now!

# Education Better Together



Rayanna Hoeft speaking to History Open House attendees about museum resources.

**By Rayanna Hoeft**  
*Director of Educational Outreach*

The Education Department at the McFaddin-Ward House recently hosted a History Open House event specifically for local educators. The event's purpose was to show appreciation to our community heroes for their service to the next generation during a very difficult school year, and demonstrate how the museum's collections and archives serve educational purposes through field trips and outreach programs. I enjoyed the engaging conversations, especially the reminiscences of the museum's

past events and educational programming.

One attendee shared how all five of her now grown children visited the museum for field trips and attended the porch dances, summer camps, and etiquette classes. Many of the attendees once participated in the beloved Junior Interpreter program, something I'm excited to expand upon and offer in the Spring of 2022. I'm looking forward to having kids learning history at our extraordinary site once again!

One of my goals is to

exchange ideas with our community by inviting educators, administrators, and community members to help develop programming that directly impacts learning. I asked attendees if they would be interested in serving in that capacity and many agreed to do so! I'm planning to organize meet-ups where we can start that process. I strongly believe in the value of community input for informing the work of cultural institutions as these sites exist for the betterment of the community. I'm grateful

to those willing to give of their precious time outside of their workday to build something special together.

I'd love to hear your memories of time spent at the McFaddin-Ward House or hear your ideas on how we can best serve the community through learning opportunities. We can meet for coffee or for a visit on our lovely front porch. My contact information is [rhoeft@mcfaddin-ward.org](mailto:rhoeft@mcfaddin-ward.org) or you may call 409-832-1906 ext 109.

## ‘Other Views’

# Christmas Baubles and Beads

By Arlene Christiansen

Can you believe it? It’s almost Christmas! While little documentation of the McFaddins or Wards having Christmas trees exists and tree ornaments in the reserve collection are few, it seems an article on the history of glass ornaments would be in order this time of year.

There are three references to a Christmas tree in Mamie’s diaries. In 1918, Ida McFaddin’s brother Lewis Caldwell, his wife Mernie, and their two small boys, Jim and Bob, came to the McFaddin home for Christmas. Mamie wrote in her diary that they gathered on Christmas morning for eggnog and had a tree “for [the] kids.” In 1922, Ida’s young nephews, Ted and Dab Caldwell, were staying with the McFaddins over Christmas while their father was in the hospital. On December 25, Mamie wrote “Had tree for boys then Carroll & I delivered presents.” (Ted recalled that tree many years later in an oral history done for the museum.) Edna Caldwell, the children’s mother, sent Mamie a very sweet letter, expressing gratitude for all she and Ida had done and writing that it was the most wonderful Christmas the boys had ever had. Another mention of a tree came on Dec. 17, 1946 when Mamie noted in her diary that “an electrician came to run a wire from the house to “put lights on tree outside.” What tree that was we don’t know.

The Christmas tree tradition dates to the 16th century in Germany, but Americans really didn’t embrace the idea until the 19th century. Most of the early trees were decorated with homemade decorations.

The first glass ornaments were made in the village of Lauscha, Germany, by Hans Greiner (1550-1609), and were



During World War II, the Corning Company mass-produced Shiny Brite glass ornaments, giving Americans an alternative to German-made ones. They could be bought by the box.

in the shape of fruits and nuts. They were so popular that artisans begin making them using clay molds, which allowed for more shapes. Mass production came in 1867 when the industry began using gas, which produced a flame that was not only less smoky but also hotter. It was then possible to blow bigger, more delicate items with richer detail.

During a visit to Germany in the 1880s, American F. W. Woolworth, founder of the Woolworth “five and dime” stores, discovered the Lauscha ornaments and began importing them to the U.S. American-made glass ornaments had been available since 1870, created by William DuMuth in New York. By the late 19th century other stores stocked Christmas orna-

ments, and by 1910, all 1,000 Woolworth stores across America were selling Christmas ornaments.

Beaumonters bought both German and American glass ornaments from Woolworth’s and S.H. Kress. Mildred Campbell Yates remembered her family’s Christmas tree in the 1920s and 1930s, “a big, fragrant spruce” that they bought at one of the local tree lots, and handmade ornaments of glass “from Germany and Czechoslovakia, delicate and old-fashioned.” German glass ornaments were considered by many to be more beautiful than American ones.

Affordable electric tree lights for homes came along in the early 20th century, and their light made the shiny glass ornaments even brighter. Eleanor Wier Heartfield



This little Santa Claus bulb from the early 20th century is the only figural Christmas light in the McFaddin-Ward House reserve collection.



Early German ornament made of handblown-glass.

remembered going to New York in 1912 with her parents and buying electric tree lights at F.A.O. Schwartz, the famous toy store. “My mother always said that we had the first electric tree lights in Beaumont, and we always believed it.” Mildred Yates said that her family’s electric tree lights “were almost as good as the candles had been,” with shapes like bird cages, fruit, fruit baskets, street lamps, and Santas.

During World War II, German ornaments weren’t available in the U.S., and Beaumonter Mildred Powell Hall missed the “pretty delicate blown glass

ornaments” they bought for their tree. Consumers could buy American-made Shiny Brite ornaments, but for many people they just weren’t as pretty, and neither were the light strings and tinsel garlands from Japan.

After the war, glass ornaments returned, but the whole tree-and-ornament scene changed, as more Americans bought artificial trees out of feathers or aluminum and decorated with unbreakable ornaments made from plastic. Today we can buy pre-decorated, pre-lighted trees, and when Christmas is over, just push the whole

thing into a closet ‘till next year. It’s much easier, though I’m not sure it’s as much fun. But Christmas is Christmas, however you decorate!

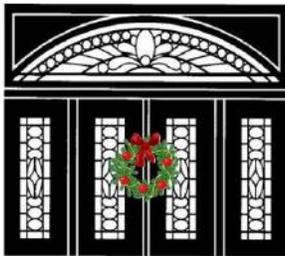


Early German ornament made of handblown-glass.

## Public Programming Perspectives

By Bel Morian

### Holiday Happenings



**Holiday Photo Shoot**  
Sunday, Dec. 5th | 12 – 3 pm  
To reserve a spot,  
call 409-832-2134.

**McFaddin-Ward  
Holiday Open House**  
Sunday, Dec. 12 | 5:30 – 7:30 pm  
Music, Refreshments,  
and Holiday Decor

Scan the QR code  
with your phone  
to preview upcoming  
MWH events.



### Upcoming Lectures

**Randy Lemmon**  
*Gardening in Southeast Texas*  
January 13, 2022

For over 25 years and with 1.4 million listeners on his Garden Line program on KTRH radio in Houston, Randy Lemmon has guided Southeast Texans on the best gardening practices for our area. Author of popular gardening books such as *Gulf Coast Gardening*, *Golfer’s Guide to Gardening*, and *New Decade Gardening: A Gulf Coast Guide*, Randy offers help to those with and without green thumbs.



Randy Lemmon

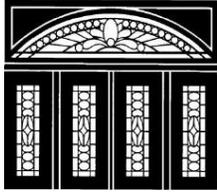
**Jennifer Thalheimer**  
*Quest of Beauty -  
Louis Comfort Tiffany’s Life and Art*  
February 10, 2022

Jennifer Thalheimer is Curator and Collection Manager at the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art in Winter Park, Florida. The Morse Museum is best known as the home to the world’s most comprehensive collection of material owned, collected and created by Louis C. Tiffany. Jennifer has been interpreting the museum’s collection while researching the life and art of Tiffany for over 20 years.



Jennifer Thalheimer

# McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE VIEWPOINTS



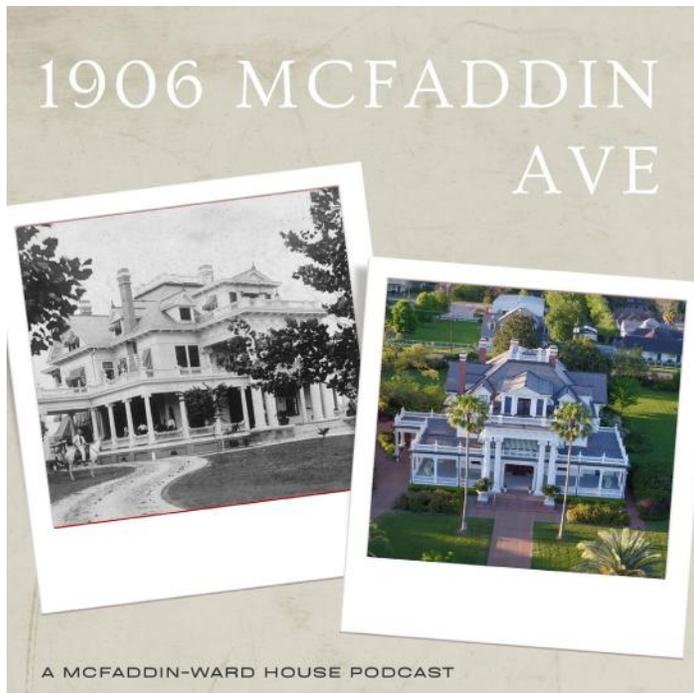
Vol. 38, No. 1  
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[www.mcfaddin-ward.org](http://www.mcfaddin-ward.org)

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## 1906 McFaddin Ave - The Podcast

The McFaddin-Ward House is proud to present 1906 McFaddin Ave, a podcast where we connect the people, places, and things of the MWH to a greater historical context.

Join Director of Educational Programming, Rayanna Hoeft, and Communications/Marketing Manager, Kara Timberlake, as they explore the stories of Southeast Texas

as a way to understand how our community got to now.

1906 McFaddin Ave can be found on Amazon, iTunes, Spotify, and the MWH website, [mcfaddin-ward.org](http://mcfaddin-ward.org)

Have questions or suggestions about future podcast topics? We'd love to hear from you! Email [mcfaddin-ward.org](mailto:mcfaddin-ward.org) with your thoughts.

## Viewpoints Goes Digital

Viewpoints is going green! The McFaddin-Ward House is transitioning to a completely digital quarterly newsletter.

For those who wish to continue receiving a print copy of Viewpoints, please call 409.832.1906 or email us at [mcfaddinwardhouse@gmail.com](mailto:mcfaddinwardhouse@gmail.com).

To sign up for our digital newsletter, scan the below QR code.



Follow the McFaddin-Ward House on social media for behind-the-scenes glimpses of museum life & historical happenings.



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