

March 2022
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McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE VIEWPOINTS

The McFaddins in the Progressive Era

By Judy Linsley

The Progressive Era in U.S. history (ca. 1895-1920) grew out of a number of diverse 19th-century reform movements, all with the common goal of making the world a better place. Otherwise, they had little in common: welfare organizations wanted to reform social ills caused by industry, urbanization, and alcohol; farmers sought fairer market conditions; women's groups pushed for female suffrage; "muckrakers" exposed monopolistic practices. The Progressive movement encompassed a wide swath of social and economic issues, all calling for sweeping changes, much of it from governmental action.

In Texas, two huge events occurred at the turn of the 20th century: the Galveston storm in September 1900 and the Spindletop oil discovery near Beaumont in 1901. Galveston's massive recovery efforts and the dynamic growth of the petroleum industry came to

dominate the Progressive movement in Texas. Social legislation was passed, increasing public school financing and ending the convict lease system, but Texas Progressives were more focused on growing the Texas economy and protecting it from out-of-state interference.

In Galveston, the weak mayor-city council was replaced with a more powerful and efficient commission system that could oversee recovery. Other U.S. cities followed Galveston's example, and though the commission system was itself eventually replaced, Galveston set the original example for strengthening municipal governments.

In Beaumont, oil boom money, not reform efforts, improved the municipal water system, provided street paving, and renewed hope for a deepwater port. Prohibition got limited local support. Since its days as a frontier river town, Beaumont had a disproportionate number

of saloons; and even when the 18th amendment outlawing alcohol passed, the voters at the ballot box where most of the saloons were concentrated defiantly voted two to one to remain wet.

In the early 20th Century, Ida and W.P.H. McFaddin were a dynamic, energetic couple with three small children. He was expanding his business interests; she was a force in Beaumont society. But how did Progressivism affect them, if at all?

Though a rugged individualist, W.P.H. supported the Progressive belief that strength lay in numbers, joining groups that supported economic development, such as the Texas Good Roads Association, the Concatenated Order of the Hoo-hoo (a lumberman's networking organization), and the Texas Welfare Commission (supporting Texas business welfare, not social).

In 1904 W.P.H. was the "originator of the idea" to form a "Rice Commis

COMING! COMING!
JULY 4 CELEBRATION
JOS. W. BAILEY
The Brilliant Borrower
Plays Syndicate Houses Only

Greater, Grander and Gorgousser Than Ever.
Refuses to Appear Under Canvass.

W. C. TYRRELL, Ringmaster

Thousands of Mystifying Drafts and Checks—Thousands
—Count 'Em—Thousands.

40—Prancing Stallions, Ownership Unknown—40
Grand Sweep of Charging Bulls

Bailey positively appears at each and every performance
in death defying, daredevil legerdemain, exploit-
ing wonderful agility as draft drawer
and check kiter.

Marvelous Note Executor. Insult Swallow and
Lie Repeller.

Bailey Executes Marvelous Act of Riding Wild Stallions
in Opposite Directions.

Moving Pictures of Blue Grass Country, Stock Farms,
Stud Horses, Race Track Scenes, Etc.

Appalling Juggling Scene—Waters-Pierce and Standard
Oil Siamese Twin Act—No Fake.

DAVID R. FRANCIS, Equilibrist, Balancing Joseph
W. Bailey on his Back—Positively World
Unequaled.

H. A. O'NEAL, Recitationist, in the Mournful Ballad:
"Bailey's Poes Were Spawmed in Hell."
Tear Compelling.

Positively Unrivaled—Thrilling Mid-Air Scene. Three
Acrobats—Hanger-Odell-Jones—Changing posi-
tions while in mid-air. World holds no peer

LEGISLATIVE MINSTREL DUO
In Great Black Face Passion Scene, Looney and Cobbs.

"Bailey is Pure as the Driven Snow." Set to music by
W. C. Tyrrell, assisted by R. Rush Norvell
and W. F. Keith

Awe-Inspiring Solution of Solving a Mystery. X-Ray
Development in Full View of the Audience, Bring-
ing to Light the \$1500 Sight Draft.

Oriental Scene, Disclosing the Cloth of Gold, Showing
PIERCE, YOKUM and KIRBY,
Kings of Finance

Greatest Menagerie on Earth,
Living Hyenas, Populists,
Dogs and Scoundrels.

Admission—Politicians 25 cents. Ladies, Farmers and
Preachers Free.

LEMON—Every Statesman Gets one as a Souvenir
—LEMON

Senator Bailey was noted for his opposition to Prohibition and his unethical behavior. This highly critical broadside, in the form of a circus program, lists some of the accusations.

Director's Desk

Learning is a Lifelong Endeavour



Dear Friends,

It's a given that museums foster among visitors an attitude of discovery -helping cultivate critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Learning isn't limited to a classroom or to school-aged children. It's a lifelong endeavor, and the McFaddin-Ward House provides rich learning experiences to individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances.

The popular McFaddin-Ward House Lecture Series is but one example of the Museum's commitment to enriching the community by offering carefully planned and executed programs that appeal to the wide-ranging interests of Southeast Texans. In January, garden-

ing guru Randy Lemmon presented a great program geared to those who love to garden. Last month's lecture, highlighting the remarkable work and life of Louis Comfort Tiffany, was presented by the curator of the Morse Museum in Florida (which holds the world's most comprehensive collection of works by Tiffany). Harry Rinker, appraiser extraordinaire, arrives March 10th for his lecture followed by a day of one-on-one appraisals of the "treasures" collected locally.

Whether it's our Lecture Series, teacher workshops for public, private and home schoolers, field trips, virtual visits to the McFaddin-Ward House,

music and movies on the lawn, or programming incorporating some of the 30,000+ objects in our collection, the McFaddin Ward House is making renewed efforts to make our many resources more accessible for the people of this region.

It's easy to find something that would interest you on our new website - www.mcfaddin-ward.org, our Facebook page - McFaddin-Ward House Museum, on Instagram - @mcfaddinwardhouse, and even TikTok - @mcfaddinwardhouse.

Tony L. Chauveaux

Curator's Corner

A Fresh Look for Spring



Bowl and saucer in "Kalana Lily" pattern

By Victoria Tamez
Curator of Collections

Since the last issue of *Viewpoints*, the Collections staff has reset the house and installed a stunning new exhibit in the Visitor Center!

You are invited to experience a nod to spring in the variety of bright colors found in the newly placed dishware and drinkware in the Dining and Breakfast Room displays. Pink glass goblets and iced tea glasses in the Dining Room complement the newly installed floral tablecloth and dishware. Fun Collections Fact: our reserve collection features a variety of silverware sets, but we only have two complete sets of silverware. We attempt to feature the other partial sets in locations around the house, so be on the lookout for the different silver patterns. The Breakfast Room has also received a makeover, switching

from a Roaring Twenties holiday party table to a quaint breakfast setting. The room is set for a breakfast buffet of eggs, sausage, toast, and fruit.

A new exhibit, *Elemental Beauty: McFaddin-Ward House Hidden Glass Gems*, can be seen in the Visitor Center. This exhibit highlights our glass pieces prepared for the wonderful lecture, "Quest of Beauty: Louis Comfort Tiffany's Life and Art" presented by Jennifer Thalheimer. Highlighted within this new installation are cut glass, colored glass, and etched glass pieces held in the museum's reserve collection. Look closely to appreciate the details not usually seen. Watch out though, I hear one is a little devil!



Place setting featuring Wedgewood's "Fairford" pattern dinner and bread plates



Cut crystal mustard jar

PROGRESSIVE

Continued from page 1

sion," a co-op of area rice farmers and canal owners that could compete with Louisiana rice interests. He also traveled to Austin to pursue a legislative solution to end unfair railroad freight rates. On the other hand, in 1912, he wrote a *Beaumont Enterprise* editorial titled "Why Cost of Living Is High," blaming, among other things, anti-trust laws, though they were also legislative solutions to unfair practices.

W.P.H.'s papers in the McFaddin-Ward House Archives contain stacks of handbills and political broadsides. One, in the form of a circus ad, skewers Texas Senator Joseph W. Bailey, noted for his opposition to Prohibition but even more so for his unethical behavior. "Bailey Executes Marvelous Act of Riding Wild Stallions in Opposite Directions," it read. Another handbill opposes creation of the "West Beaumont Drainage District," which would have been considered a Progressive improvement.

Ida wholeheartedly supported the Progressive idea of making the world better by helping the less fortunate, but she believed more in private charity than in government action; her credo was "from those to whom much is given, much is expected." During this era she gave generously of her time and money to United Charities, the Women's Club, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the Red Cross, the YWCA, and the Beaumont Day Nursery.

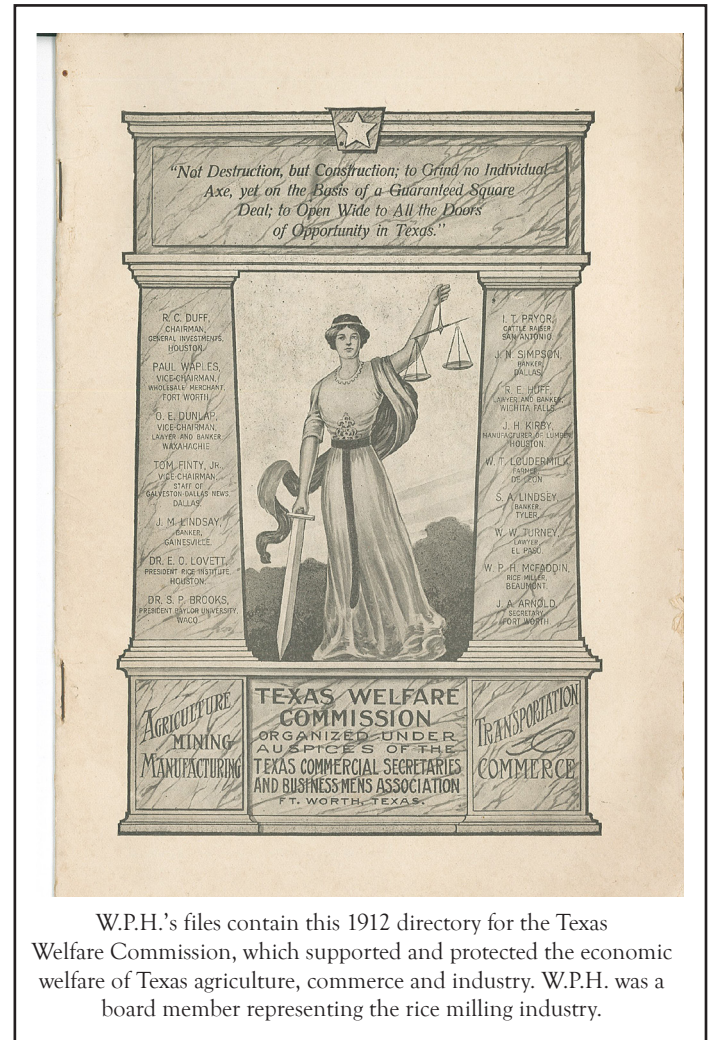
Prohibition and suffrage comprised the two big social issues of the time. The McFaddins apparently didn't support Prohibition. The Episcopal Church, of which they were members, supported temperance but not necessarily Prohibition. In 1912, W.P.H.

hosted a "stag" dinner at the McFaddin home for Texas Governor Oscar Colquitt, who was a "wet" (against Prohibition). We know the family served wine at home and during Prohibition purchased rum for Christmas eggnog from the local bootlegger. Recipes in the collection include not only eggnog but berry wine and even one for homemade gin.

On the other hand, Ida, at least, must have supported female suffrage, given her independent and patriotic nature. As a new member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, she would have known that many early DAR members fought for women's votes. She and her daughter Mamie voted for the first time on July 27, 1918, after Texas women were allowed to vote in primary elections.

In Ida's papers is a copy of the Congressional Record for January 12, 1915, the day that Congress voted 204-174 against giving women the right to vote. Someone marked for special attention the speech of Rep. Stanley Bowdle of Ohio, who opposed female suffrage because his personal survey of streetcar passengers showed that only a small percentage of female riders read the newspaper.

It would be wonderful to know Ida's reaction to Bowdle's address, or to have her opinion of Rep. Martin Dies, from East Texas, who shared his worst fear. "I am told," he began ominously, "that the sexes love opposites, and I am afraid that a race of manly women will call forth a race of womanly men." He then predicted, "Such a race of women would be too stern for the tender offices of motherhood without being ferocious enough for the camp of the Army, and such a race of men



W.P.H.'s files contain this 1912 directory for the Texas Welfare Commission, which supported and protected the economic welfare of Texas agriculture, commerce and industry. W.P.H. was a board member representing the rice milling industry.

would not be fit to fill the vacancy in either place."

Before that could happen, the U.S. entered the Great War in April 1917, and that conflict ended with the Armistice in November 1918. By then, popular opinion favored female suffrage because women had contributed so much to the war effort through nursing, the Red Cross and other organizations.

By 1920, two Constitutional amendments had been passed, the 18th banning alcoholic beverages and the 19th giving women the vote. Two major Progressive goals

had been reached, and the Progressive Era gave way to the consumer culture of the 1920s. The country was ready, in the words of newly elected President Warren G. Harding, for a "return to normalcy." (The proper word is "normality." Harding made up "normalcy," but now it's accepted as a word.)

In the end, while both Ida and W.P.H. McFaddin might have supported only certain Progressive ideas, like other Americans they were ultimately impacted by the almost imperceptible changes that such a broad movement inevitably brought.

Education

Continuing the Conversation

By Rayanna Hoeft

Director of Educational Outreach

The McFaddin-Ward House (MWH) believes it important to acknowledge the contributions of African Americans to the history of the local community, as well as to the history of our unique site. Household staff at the MWH played a pivotal role in the care and keeping of the family, their home, and its furnishings, which comprise the museum's valued collection. *1906 McFaddin Ave*, the museum's podcast, featured various aspects of Black history in celebration of Black History Month.

For several months Kara Timberlake, the MWH communications manager, and I researched topics pertaining to the African American experience. We stumbled across interesting stories and characters in our research. Creating only one episode on the topic proved daunting considering the richness of the scholarship and the varied perspectives. As a result, this unique history will be explored over a multitude of episodes.

The first episode revisits the purpose of Black History Month and why February was chosen as the time to focus on this unique

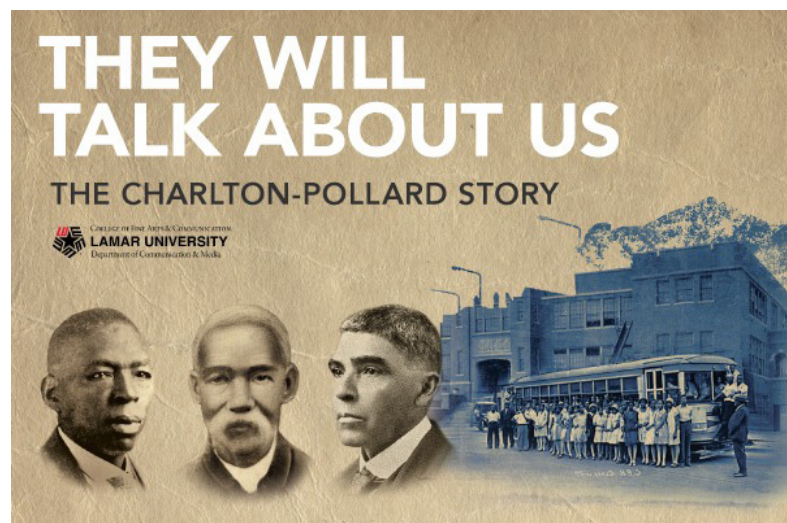
history. We also dive into free Black communities that developed during the Antebellum period in Southeast Texas.

The second episode features an interview with local historian, Judy Linsley, who published scholarship pertaining to the McFaddin-Ward House staff at the turn of the 20th century and until the house transitioned to a museum in 1982.

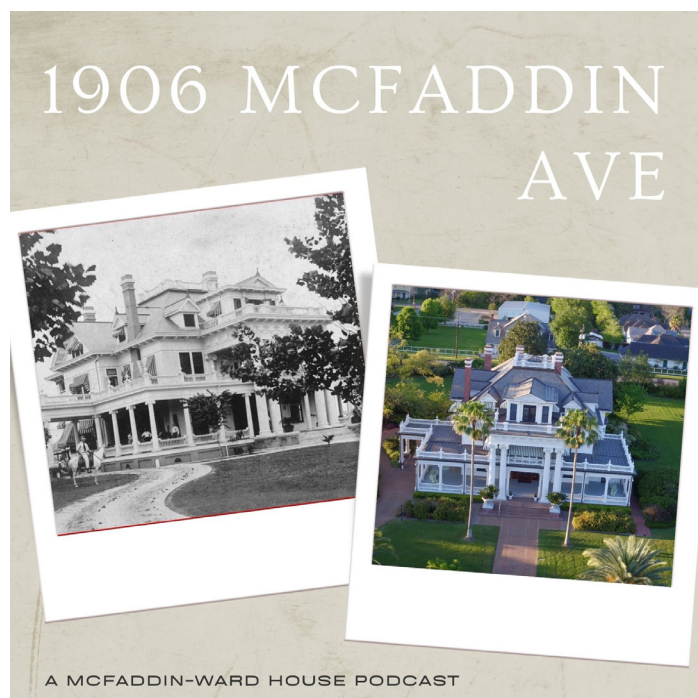
The third episode features another conversation with Judy Linsley regarding her research on the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood, the oldest Black neighborhood in Beaumont, and her collaboration with LUTV Productions. She discusses her motivations for researching this topic, her methodologies, and what she hopes her research will add to the historiography of Black history.

We celebrate the work completed by LUTV Productions as they premiered the documentary, *They Will Talk About Us: The Charlton-Pollard Story*, which was screened at the Jefferson Theatre on February 18th.

Tune in to *1906 McFaddin Ave* to hear more about this fascinating research.



Lamar University Television Productions produced the documentary, *They Will Talk About Us: The Charlton-Pollard Story*, which chronicles the origins of one of the oldest Black neighborhoods in Beaumont.



The McFaddin-Ward House podcast is available on Amazon, iTunes, and Spotify.

‘Other Views’

Staff Stories Complete the Narrative



Andrew Molo chauffeured for Ida McFaddin between 1913 and 1935.



Husband-and-wife, Tom & Albertine Parker, worked for the McFaddins for 37 years.



Louis Lemon was the McFaddin cook for 37 years.

By Arlene Christiansen

Guests often remark on the expanse of the home when they visit and wonder how a family could maintain its cleanliness. The answer, of course, is household employees.

Household employees were central to the inner workings of the 12,800 square foot McFaddin residence. A butler or downstairs maid, an upstairs maid, a cook, a yardman, a laundress, and two chauffeurs - one for Ida and one for W.P.H. - comprised the home's core household staff.

Staff served as important status symbols — visible indications of their employers' wealth. They were trained to work quietly and efficiently. Their behind-the-scenes work, as well as their secondary social status, kept them in the background. On their own time, however, they had rich personal lives: shopping, being with family, and attending church or social events.

McFaddin employees worked long

hours — a typical work schedule for a McFaddin household employee was six days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. with one afternoon and Sundays off. Albertine Parker, McFaddin cook and maid, recalled that the McFaddins expected a lot of their workers, "They were good to you, but you didn't go there to sit down."

Wages were uniformly low, though McFaddin employees probably earned above-average wages. In 1939, for instance, average annual earnings in Texas for household employees were \$258; McFaddin household employees averaged \$444.

Low wages were in part offset by other considerations. Employees who lived in rooms in the McFaddins' carriage house paid no rent. Both they and the household employees who "lived out" ate most, if not all, their meals in the McFaddins' kitchen. Those who were interviewed remembered that while the McFaddins

demanded much of their employees, they also fed them very well, provided medical care, uniforms, and Christmas and wedding gifts.

Several of the McFaddin's household employees — generally referred to early in the century as servants or domestics — enjoyed long periods of association with the family. Many other men and women, most of them African American, worked at the McFaddin home over the years. Between 1900 and 1950, over 100 men and women worked for the McFaddins. Some stayed for years, others only a day. Their contributions to the care of the McFaddin-Ward House made it possible for guests to enjoy the museum today.

Andrew Molo began chauffeuring for Ida about 1913 and did so, with gaps, until 1935. He sometimes doubled as a butler. During World War I, he was subject to the draft, which greatly worried Ida. In the 1930s, Andrew sometimes took his

nephews and Ida in her car to ride the "Joy Road," an area of small manmade roller-coaster-like hills that people could drive their cars over.

Tom Parker was WPH's chauffeur from 1910 until W.P.H. died in 1935, and their long hours together created a degree of familiarity and affection between them. W.P.H. gave Tom an overcoat because he spent so much time waiting outside. Tom helped to care for W.P.H. in his last illness, sleeping nearby. After W.P.H.'s death, Tom ran the McFaddins' parking lot downtown. When he died in 1947, he had worked for the family for 37 years.

Buck Sam managed the McFaddin farm for 52 years, raising crops to feed the family and the ranch hands. Every week he delivered fresh produce, milk, eggs, butter, homemade sausage, chickens, and other food to McFaddin homes in Beaumont.

Although Buck Sam couldn't read or write, he carried a stamp that said 'Buck Sam' that was honored in all area farm or ranch supply stores. The McFaddins donated toward the building of his church, and Caldwell McFaddin spoke at his funeral in 1961, praising Buck's loyal service and affirming the McFaddin family's love for him. The family made it a point to attend the funerals of longtime employees.

Louis Lemon served as the McFaddin cook for 37 years. He began cooking at the McFaddins' ranch in south Jefferson County in 1915, and then moved to the house in the early 1920s. An excellent cook, Louis was known for being a

dapper dresser and possessing a temperamental disposition, occasionally throwing red peppers into the wood stove burners to keep people out of the kitchen. Louis died on February 28, 1952, at the age of 76, in the staff quarters in the Carriage House. When he died, Mamie and Carroll Ward and Mamie's brother Caldwell McFaddin went to the funeral in his hometown of Opelousas, Louisiana, where Caldwell gave a eulogy.

Cecelia Smith came from Louisiana in 1906 with her mother, Brunie Thibodeaux Smith, who became the McFaddins' laundress. Cecelia recollected that Mamie, five years older, taught her and Hilda their ABCs. As a child, Cecelia helped her mother with the washing and ironing; when Brunie did extra work at night at the McFaddins' parties, Cecelia came along so her mother wouldn't have to walk home alone. When she and Hilda were older, Ida paid their tuition to Holy Rosary School in Galveston.

As an adult, Cecelia worked for the McFaddins until about 1922, when she moved back to Galveston for better pay. In 1940 she returned to Beaumont and moved into the Carriage House.

After the deaths of Ida in 1950 and Carroll in 1961, which left Mamie alone in her home, Cecelia spent nights in the main house to keep Mamie company. In 1975, Mamie established a trust for her devoted maid. When Mamie died on October 24, 1982, Cecelia stayed on in the carriage house until her own health prevented her from living alone. Cecelia's memories, preserved in oral

interviews, were invaluable for documenting life at the McFaddin-Ward House and Carriage House.

Each of the employees named in this article had a special relationship with the family as shown by many years of faithful service. Many became trusted companions, though still operating within the constraints of employer-employee relations and segregation.

Their stories are important to our site and help complete the narrative of what life was like at the McFaddin-Ward House.

To learn more about the staff and to delve into the stories of local African American history, tune in to the MWH podcast, *1906 McFaddin Ave*, available on Amazon, iTunes, and Spotify.



Buck Sam managed the McFaddin farm for 52 years.



Mamie McFaddin Ward with Cecilia Smith, center, and two other members of the household staff before a party in the 1960s.

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(409) 832-2134: Visitor Center
www.mcfaddin-ward.org

The
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Public Programming Perspectives

By Bel Morian

Holiday Highlights:

The 2021 Holiday Season glittered with events and guests. The museum topped off 2021 with a festive Holiday Photo Shoot, Docent Preview, group tours to view the Christmas interpretation, and Holiday Open House. Home for the Holidays Open House brought 270 visitors to the museum to enjoy a variety of music, carolers, Christmas treats, and to visit with that fabulous fella from the North Pole.

Visitors From Far and Wide:

During 2021, the museum welcomed visitors from 42 states and 9 countries. It is such an honor to share our McFaddin-Ward House with such a varied guest audience.

Join In:

The McFaddin-Ward House will hold a Volunteer Docent Training Course in March. The history and culture shared in this course is a truly invaluable glimpse into Southeast Texas from the late 1800s to the present. The course covers local/family history, architecture, material culture, restoration practices, and more. Volunteer Docents lead tours and assist with school tours and events. Please call 409-832-2134 for course information.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 10 @ 6:30 p.m.

Lecture: Harry Rinker
How to Find, Evaluate & Manage Your Collection

Friday, March 11 @ 9 a.m. - noon

Individual Appraisal Clinics

Thursday, March 31 @ 5 p.m.

Music in the Gardens

Thursday, April 14 @ 6:30 p.m.

Lecture: Jessica Dupuy
Viva Texas Vino & History of Foods

Thursday, May 5 @ 5 p.m.

Music in the Gardens

Thursday, May 12 @ 6:30 p.m.

Lecture: Ken Farmer
What Do I Do With That?
Conserving Your Treasures & What Not To Do

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

