

December 2023
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McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE VIEWPOINTS

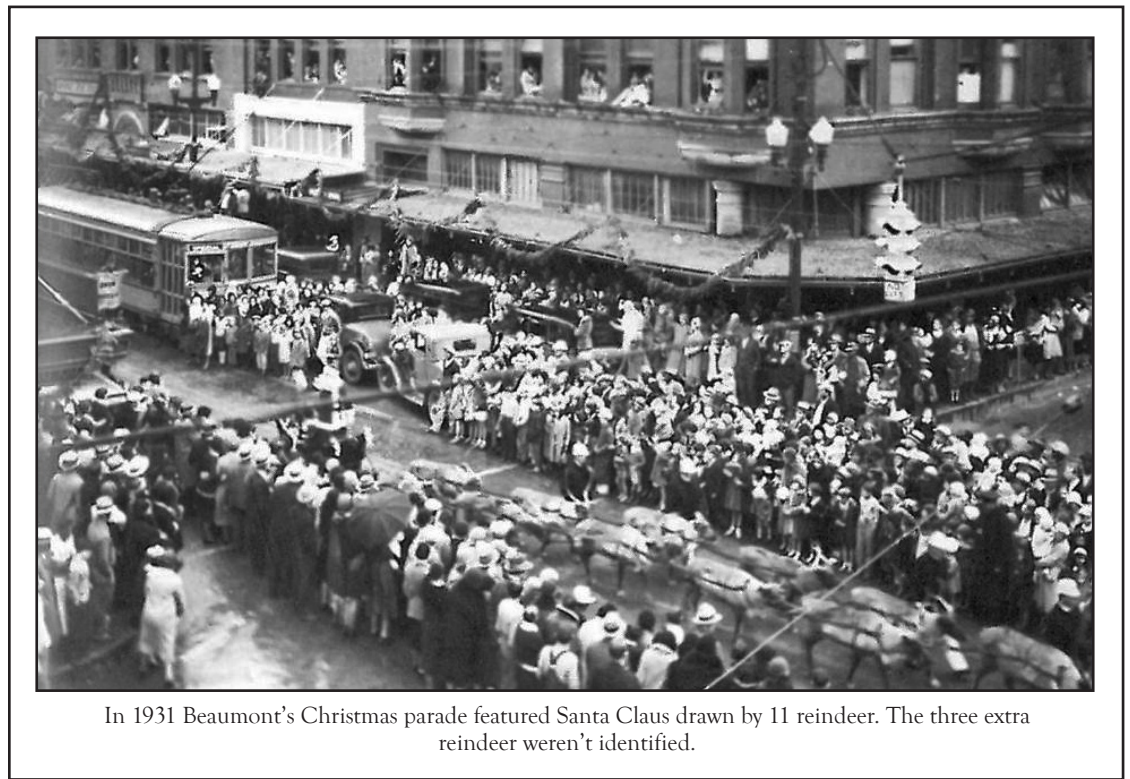
Christmas Giving In Difficult Times

By Judy Linsley

When the Stock Market crashed in 1929, it took awhile for Beaumont to feel the effects of the Great Depression that followed, principally because of the strong local economy based on the petrochemical industry. By 1931, however, the Depression was a reality, as workers were laid off at Magnolia Refinery, the city's largest employer. All year, but in particular at Christmas, local leaders fought an uphill battle to assist the needy. By working together, they saw a measure of success, as local newspapers reported.

Ida McFaddin encouraged this collaborative effort in a December 1931 speech to the Woman's Club titled "Co-operation," pointing out the benefits to be gained. Ida took her own advice, as did her daughter, Mamie McFaddin Ward, both women working actively in civic and charitable causes.

In 1931 the Beaumont Community Chest kicked off its annual Christmas drive on Dec. 1, over-subscribing its goal by \$4,000. Mamie McFaddin Ward was captain of team four, north side citywide sales army, woman's division, which raised \$636 in just four hours, "the largest amount raised by any one team." C.T.



In 1931 Beaumont's Christmas parade featured Santa Claus drawn by 11 reindeer. The three extra reindeer weren't identified.

Butler, Community Chest chairman, commended Beaumonters for supporting "the common good of our community, so strong and powerful as to be almost a tangible thing."

On December 4, the Beaumont Family Welfare Bureau, the umbrella organization for community assistance, announced that its case numbers had tripled over the previous month. Two Beaumonters donated a truck to the Bureau to enable pickups and deliveries.

The Boy Scouts collected old

and broken toys to be refurbished and distributed to needy children. The Girl Reserves, the "Blue Triangle" girls of the Y.W.C.A., made clothes for the dolls repaired by the Scouts, collected used clothing, and raised money in schools for gifts and baskets.

Churches all over town charged admission to special music programs to benefit impoverished families. The Catholic Daughters of America diverted \$100 of their Christmas toy fund to purchase shoes for

needy children. The Chamber of Commerce assigned work to unemployed men who were reluctant to accept charity.

Not everyone who needed assistance were Beaumont residents. Boy Scout troops planned to care for "unfortunate campers stopping on the outskirts of Beaumont and along the river banks." The Lions Club provided quarters for destitute transient women and girls who became stranded in Beaumont.

Some projects from those days are still around in one form or

Director's Desk

Dear Friends -

After being closed to visitors since February for the major electrical re-wiring project, we are delighted to welcome you, your family, and friends to be our guests and visit the historic house handsomely decorated once again for the holidays.

This year's holiday interpre-

tation - *Glitz Up the Tree: A Glamorous Holiday with the McFaddins* - will immerse guests in the elaborate decorating traditions of an elegant and extravagant McFaddin Family holiday party. Shining silver dinnerware, sparkling crystal, glamorous party clothes, and other special items from the

reserve collection will be on display.

Due to the large crowds we experienced last year, we will host two Holiday Open Houses from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on the first two Sunday evenings in December - December 3rd and December 10th - with great music, holiday treats,

and a special visitor from the North Pole await you.

We hope to see you there!



Tony L. Chauveaux



Be Our Guest!

McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE

Holiday Open House



SUNDAY, DEC 3RD and SUNDAY, DEC 10TH

5 PM - 7 PM

McFaddin-Ward House | 1906 Calder Ave | Beaumont

HOLIDAY DÉCOR | LIVE MUSIC | REFRESHMENTS

The event is admission free and open to the public.

Curator's Corner

Glitz Up the Tree: A Glamorous Holiday with the McFaddins

By Victoria Tamez

Curator of Collections

Happy Holidays from all of the Collections staff here at the McFaddin-Ward House! We are excited to have you all come out and see our new interpretation for the holiday season. Our theme for this year is all about glitz and glam. The house is set up for a glitzy holiday party and we would like to invite you to come by and see it for yourselves!

The Dining Room is filled with shining silver pieces and even some secret crystal ones. Each piece has its own unique set of details that, upon closer inspection, can make the object even more ornate. Certain silver pieces currently on display even have monograms that you can see if you look close enough. Look out for the monogram on the punch bowl and punch cups in the Breakfast Room.

Evening gowns, furs, suits, and purses can be found all around the house to show the McFaddins ready for a holiday party or night out. A sparkling evening gown greets you in the Entry Hall with a snazzy tuxedo by its side. A velvet and fur outfit sits in the Pink Parlor, ready for a cold winter day. And a combination of both sparkling gown and fur can be found upstairs in the Primary Bedroom. These objects are safely displayed on conservation forms to show the whole dress or outfit and how it could have looked on a McFaddin or McFaddin-Ward in the past.

This year we are having two Holiday Open Houses, and we hope to see you there! We will be hosting our Open House on December 3rd and December 10th from 5-7pm. On behalf of myself, part-time Collections Assistant Brianna Cross, Museum Techs Mary Acclis, Christal Coleman, and Desa Letulle, we wish you a happy holidays!



Dining Room



Entrance Hall



Primary Bedroom

XMAS GIVING

Continued from page 1

another: the *Beaumont Journal's* Empty Stocking Fund and Salvation Army kettles. The annual St. Mark's Episcopal Church "bazaar, merchant's meal [whatever that is] and turkey dinner" to fund "Christmas boxes and relief" later became today's popular St. Mark's Chili Supper and Bazaar.

Most groups funneled their work through the Family Welfare Bureau. The newspaper reported that the "entire city" joined to help those in need, attesting that "More than 1,000 families in city and environs get Christmas baskets" of food, clothing, and toys. The Boy Scouts gave out some 2,500 refurbished toys. Kiwanis reported 200 boys at their YMCA Garth Friendship club Christmas tree. The Beaumont Day Nursery, actively supported by both Ida and Mamie, treated its children to "a Christmas tree loaded with gifts and sparkling with tinsel and decorations," as well as a Christmas dinner.

The next year, 1932, brought further hardship, but Beaumont's Christmas assistance work, though slightly scaled back, continued. As in the past, the Boy Scouts, Girl Reserves, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, schools, churches, and countless other groups raised money or collected goods for needy families.

In those days of rigid segregation, the Family Welfare Bureau served both the Black and white community, though separately. On December 22, the Bureau gave a Christmas party for white children ages 2 to 12, handing out stockings filled with candy, fruit and nuts, and entertaining with a music and dance program. On December 23, the

Bureau did the same for African American children. Interestingly, the band from a local African American High School, Charlton-Pollard, furnished music at both events.

Ida McFaddin continued her charitable involvement. Designated "Col. Mrs. W.P.H McFaddin," she headed up the women's division of Community Chest during its 5-day fundraiser. Ida also presided over a "literary and music event" given by St. Mark's Episcopal Church Guild to benefit St. Mark's Carroll Street Mission. She gave a "Christmas greeting" and following the program, related the history of the song "Silent Night, Holy Night."

In spite of the grim economy, Beaumonters still celebrated, brightening the season with sights and sounds. In 1931, the city's annual Christmas parade featured Santa Claus in a sleigh being pulled by eleven real, live reindeer. The newspaper didn't say where they came from—the North Pole, presumably—or account for the three extra deer (Rudolph hadn't yet come along, and that still leaves two). No one cared. Between 30,000 and 50,000 people gathered to see downtown Christmas lights turned on to start up the shopping season.

In 1932, Santa didn't ride in a sleigh, but in a "flashing green car." Not Mrs. Claus, but "Miss Mary Christmas," played by local dance instructor Judith Sproule, rode on her own float. At least 30 entries participated, including school bands, student and P.T.A. groups, local organizations, and Beaumont businesses.

Music brought Christmas cheer as well. In 1931 the Woman's Club, assisted by Beaumont



music mentor Lena Milam, presented a free "Community Sing" at the handsome, relatively new city auditorium. Christmas music was accompanied by "living pictures"—tableaux of famous paintings and Christmas scenes. It drew a crowd of 1,500, in spite of a heavy rain. The concert was repeated in 1932, minus the "living pictures" and hopefully the rain. Beaumont school students also sang Christmas carols at Tyrrell Library before caroling at Beaumont homes where there was a lighted candle in the window.

The Beaumont Family Welfare

Bureau director suggested a future advisory board of representatives from civic organizations to work with the Bureau, directly connecting it with members of the community who could help. "Only good could result from such a move," she stated. Whether it happened or not, the director was right. Cooperation benefits everyone.

To their everlasting credit, civic, charitable, and business leaders banded together to give Beaumonters a Merry Christmas in very dark times. The McFaddin-Ward House wishes all of you a Merry Christmas in our time!

Education

Education Dept. Gears Up for End of Year Field Trips and Educator Outreach

By Jennifer Lowrance

Director of Educational Programming

It truly is a wonderful time of the year here at the McFaddin-Ward House! I couldn't help but get into the Holiday spirit watching the house get trimmed with lights and bows and the splendor of holiday's past in the house. My office looks a little bit like Santa's workshop with the makings of Christmas crafts and activities for upcoming field trips and our magnificent Holiday Open House covering my desk and workspaces. I have been a busy elf putting together these craft bags for children to make or take with them, all while having my Christmas music playing in the background!

In the middle of our Holiday Open House schedule, we will also take part in the Holiday Tree Lighting

at AMSET, with a table set up and a wonderful children's activity that will be a keepsake for them to take home.

While waiting for the museum to re-open for tours following the electrical project, I had the opportunity to research and create lesson plans for the museum's website. With the help of our web designer, I was able to reorganize the Education page and add lessons in pdf form for easy download for educators. I look forward to adding more to the page and working with our web designer to make the virtual educational experience more interactive for teachers and students.

Since the museum's reopening, we have hosted almost 100 students

and have 1,200 students already scheduled to tour this Spring. Our first school tour was a Homeschool group from Southwest Louisiana. What a wonderful group! Students from 8 years old to 18 all marveled at the home and grounds. They asked poignant questions, took selfies, and giggled as they got a little messy digging their hands into the sunflower seed butter to make birdseed balls. There were smiles all around!

Filled with the joy of seeing these students' smile as they learn about history through their tour at the McFaddin-Ward House truly inspires me. I am looking forward to seeing how many students and educators we can reach in 2024!



In October, the McFaddin-Ward House partnered with the John Jay French House Museum and Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum for a collaborative "100 Years of History" field trip, hosting a homeschool group from Southwest Louisiana.

'Other Views'

Focus on Food at Christmas

By Arlene Christiansen

The McFaddins, like many other families, made a big deal over Christmas Dinner. Sometimes they served it at lunch, while other times they waited until the evening. Whenever they chose to have it, it was a grand occasion. This was a time of "feast and fellowship" and was one of the most important meals of the year. Family and friends gathered to share a feast, at the same time enjoying time spent together. From our archives, family records, oral interviews, and Beaumont history, we are able to understand how some Beaumont residents celebrated the Christmas meal.

Every family seemed to have a traditional menu. There was always a meat course; turkey, wild duck or goose, roast beef, and country ham were among the favorites, with dressing of some variety (whether cornbread, oyster, rice, or other). Ambrosia and sweet potatoes

were high on the list. Other dishes mentioned were macaroni and cheese, fruit cocktail, scalloped potatoes, English peas, candied yams, gravy, and Parker House rolls. Dessert consisted of cabinet pudding, plum pudding, and fruitcake. These people knew how to eat!

Fruitcake was a popular ending for most Christmas meals. In the 1920s and '30s most cooks included candied fruits, like cherries, citron, and such in the recipe. In Beaumont, the place to procure these items would be Angelo's Specialty Foods. The store also provided dates that one homemaker used in her date-nut roll. Raisins for the fruitcake came looking like a bunch of grapes which had been flattened, as they were quite large and still on the stem. They would be taken off of the stem, seeded, and cut



A "faux" turkey on the sideboard in the Butler's Pantry reminds us of the turkey the McFaddins served at Christmas.

up. The citrons came halved and, also had to be cut up, as did currents. Some cooks started their fruitcakes shortly after Thanksgiving. They put the cakes in crocks, poured whiskey over them, then allowed them to set up. These cakes were quite different from what we see today, they were very dark and probably smelled to high heaven.

Eggnog was also a mainstay around Christmas time. On December 24, 1913, the Beaumont Enterprise shared a recipe for eggnog for a party (3½ gallons). This recipe called for the requisite eggs, milk, sugar, 2½ quarts of Cream of Kentucky Whiskey, and 1 pint of Santa Cruz rum! Ida McFaddin's recipe in the McFaddin-Ward House cookbook, *Perfectly Splendid*, is a little tamer, with only 1/3 cup of rum in it. A side note in the cookbook mentions that during the

holidays Tom Parker, W.P.H. McFaddin's chauffeur, would take the eggnog makings to W.P.H.'s office, to be served to staff and business associates. No doubt that was a happy crowd.

Another Beaumont family remembers their grandmother cracking and "parching" - roasting - pecans with butter and salt in an old wood stove. The pecans were either placed in tins for giving or saved for their own Christmas table. Another favorite of this family was cheese straws, also made by the grandmother, in "long and peppery strips of very short pastry, brittle with Cheddar cheese."

A popular place for purchasing coffee and exotic ingredients for cooking was Longe's Coffee Company on Pearl Street, described as "the most wonderful place in Beaumont, maybe even in the world."

We Have
Fruit Cake
and Plenty of it.
Come in and Get
it Today.



Beaumont Bakery Co.
580 Pearl Street
"The Home of Pullman Bread"

For those who didn't want to make their own fruitcake, the Beaumont Bakery Company offered a delicious alternative.

This store handled spices that “suggested oceans far beyond the Gulf,” and had glass cases “filled with divinity, pecan rolls, fudge varieties, butter mints and marzipan fruits.”

For less exotic ingredients folks would go to The French Market Grocery. A 1901 advertisement advised customers to “Please give all orders by midnight [Christmas Eve], as no orders will be taken for delivery after that time.” Who do you suppose was taking orders at midnight Christmas Eve?

In 1912 turkeys were scarce and selling for 17½ cents a pound, which was considered high. By 1922 the cost of living had risen, and Christmas turkeys could be bought alive for 40 cents per pound, or “dressed” for 45 cents. That same year fruitcake was 75 cents a pound, and cranberries were 20 cents a pound.

The December 17, 1921 *Beaumont Journal* stated: “With the price of turkey still high and plenty of ducks and geese flying there are a whole lot of people going out to try and get a Christmas goose or a brace of ducks. The successful hunters will put their game on ice till Christmas day and then have it as the main dish of the festive board.”

Christmas dinner in the 20th century was not particularly different from what we experience today. We probably don’t go to as much trouble as they did; after all, we have more ingredients readily available, and in our much busier lives, that’s important. You can go to the supermarket and buy a whole dinner already prepared, but somehow, I doubt that it tastes the same. Whether your meal is from scratch or ready-made, enjoy it!

Edna's Egnog Splendid

8 Eggs
 8 Tablespoon sugar
 8 jigger whiskey
 1 quart Cream ½ double & milk
 Beat yolks until almost white gradually add sugar until no grains.
 Gradually add whiskey then the cream - freeze in beaten whites
 add ½ cup rum or Brandy -
 Mary Edna's Egnog

1 doz eggs
 1 qt whiskey
 1 lb powdered sugar
 1 qt double cream
 1" whole milk
 mix as all Egnog -
 milk on top

Ida McFaddin declared “Edna’s Egnog” recipe to be “Splendid,” her highest praise for a recipe. Edna was Edna Shaut Caldwell, married to Ida’s brother Dabney.

Public Programming Perspectives

By Bel Morian

Fall Programming Highlights:

- September** The Fall season began with a fabulous concert by Jimmy Simmons and Friends. Over 300 guests enjoyed the beautiful moonlit evening.
- October** Guests really “dug” Andre LuJan at our October Lecture. Every seat was filled with those eager to hear about Texas fossils.
- The gardens were rocking with Jivin’ Gene and our Swamp Pop presentation by Rachel Stiles on Oct. 20th. Attendees danced under the starlight with another full house of over 300 friends.
- November** In preparation for the holidays, Jennifer Pickens shared insights during her lecture *Entertaining at the White House With Time Honored Traditions*. A packed house of guests enjoyed a look at the history and holiday traditions of the White House.
- The McFaddin-Ward Holiday Photo Shoot on Nov. 12th was enjoyed by many families. What fun it was to see all ages dressed for their holiday photos.
- December** The McFaddin-Ward Holiday Open House events, on Dec. 3 and Dec. 10, are our sparkling, annual highlights. Glorious decorations, beautiful music, Santa, delicious treats and visits with you, our friends, instill the Christmas spirit for us all.

McFADDIN-WARD HOUSE VIEWPOINTS



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(409) 832-1906: Office
(409) 832-2134: Visitor Center
www.mcfaddin-ward.org

The
McFADDIN-WARD
HOUSE
725 North Third Street
BEAUMONT, TEXAS
77701-1629
Return Service Requested

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ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BEAUMONT, TX
PERMIT NO. 271

Upcoming Lectures & Events

Sunday, December 3
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Holiday Open House #1
Begin at the Visitor Center

Sunday, December 10
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Holiday Open House #2
Begin at the Visitor Center

Thursday, January 18
6:30 p.m.

Lecture featuring Ed Dickens, Union Pacific Heritage Operations
"Restoration and Operations of the Famous Big Boy Engine"
Visitor Center Lecture Hall

Thursday, February 15
6:30 p.m.

Lecture featuring Troy West, renowned saddlemaker
"Artistry and History of Ranching Leatherwork, Silver, and Saddlery"
Visitor Center Lecture Hall

Thursday, February 22
6 p.m. gates/6:30 p.m. music

Music at the McFaddins' featuring Western Bling
East Lawn

Sunday, March 3
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

SOAR Family Day 2024
McFaddin-Ward House Lawn

Thursday, March 14
6:30 p.m.

SOAR Family Texas Trivia Night with The Know Show

Thursday, April 18
6:30 p.m.

Lecture featuring Dr. Michael Bell, National WWII Museum NOLA
"The Arsenal of Democracy: WWII Lessons and Legacies"
Visitor Center Lecture Hall

Thursday, May 16
6:30 p.m.

Lecture featuring Bob Wittman, Retired FBI and Author
"Art Crime and the FBI: How Masterpieces are Stolen and Recovered"
Visitor Center Lecture Hall

JOIN IN:

The McFaddin-Ward House is actively recruiting Docents and volunteers in several different museum areas.
Please call 409-832-2134 or email visitorcenter@mcfaddin-ward.org for information.

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



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

