

KYGMC

Home of the KSB Miniatures Collection
and Old Pogue Experience

Window to the past.

Bridge to the future.



KENTUCKY
GATEWAY
MUSEUM
CENTER

Messenger

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WINTER / DECEMBER 2019

MEMBER RECEPTION
Celebrating our Christmas Exhibits

Tuesday, December 3, 2019 from 4:30pm-7:00pm



THE VIEW FROM SECOND AND SUTTON

It's the most wonderful time of the year in Downtown Maysville. Your Museum Center on Sutton and Second Streets has the Christmas and Winter spirit in the air with many special events and exhibits.

During the Christmas season and until January 4, we are featuring the **Nativity Scenes from Near and Far** in the *Calvert Gallery*, **Holiday Trains**, the beautiful **Paintings of**



Steve White from the Museum's Collection in the *Wormald Gallery* along with **The KSB Miniatures Collection** decked out for the holidays. These new exhibits will highlight the Museum experience during the winter months. Opening in January 2020 in the Calvert Gallery will be a KYGMC produced exhibit, **Lifestyles of the Rich and Shameless: A Portrait of the Magnificent 1920's**.

The *Limestone Building* features our new gift shop, **The Still Room, Bourbon Emporium** with a wide selection of Old Pogue related gifts, Bourbon souvenirs, prints and jewelry. The **Museum Shop** in the Atrium has a wide range of Christmas gift items including *Steve White Prints*, quality miniatures, *Blenko glass*, *Granville Pottery* and many other unique items. The proceeds from the **Museum Shop** and **Still Room** help support Museum endeavors and outreach projects. Make sure you take time to visit and shop at the Museum during the Christmas Season. Gift certificates are available and can be used for any Museum purchase from gifts to admission tickets.

Our Kentucky Gateway Museum Center is having a great year! 2019 has been a time of excitement and growth in our attendance and services including the *Charter Dinner Cele-*



bration, local teachers using our new classrooms, *Old Pogue Experience* events, the *BIG READ* activities and many new exhibits and historical displays.

Our **Annual Sustaining Fund Drive** is in progress and your donations to this fund helps to provide the financial foundation for the upcoming year of 2020. Your donations in 2019 allowed the museum to expand our programs, exhibits and museum services through the use of the historic Limestone Building and new exhibit upgrades in the Atrium. New exhibits, education outreach activities, the international gathering of miniature artists, research library activities, outstanding exhibits and the partnership with *Old Pogue Distillery*, the further development of the Bourbon History Gallery along with expanded presentations in the *KSB Miniatures Collection* have been some of the highlights of the 2019 museum



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**NATIVITY SCENES
FROM NEAR
AND FAR**

*Open through
January 4, 2020*

Compliments of John Sims, Jr.
70th Legislative District



john.sims@lrc.ky.gov

year. Our attendance continues to be on a record pace both for members, visitors and students visiting the Museum Center. We are hopeful to reach an attendance by the end of December 2019 of over 20,000 visitors!

Your Museum Center has been blessed with donations of many historical items, rare artifacts, paintings and documents for the Museum's collection. We have enjoyed learning from our special seminars and research programs. We have reached over 7,500 students to date in 2019 through Museum Scouts, outreach activities and class visits to the Museum



Center It has been a year of excitement and joy in knowing that we are all a part of the Museum Center that is the oldest chartered museum in Kentucky and continues to provide historical reference for all patrons.

It is with a thankful spirit that we again ask for your generous financial support for our program in 2020. Please consider being a Sustaining Patron for 2020 and helping your Museum grow in outreach and services in the coming year. We look forward to seeing you during the Christmas and Winter season in the Museum Center.

Thank you for your support.

C.J. Hunter IV
Executive Director

HIXSON'S HOARDINGS AND MORE...

By Tandy Nash

The first animal rights activist, and in fact, the Patron Saint of animals was St. Francis of Assisi. He tried to persuade the emperor "to put laws of the land that men of means should provide for the poor and animals at Christmastime since they were the first ones to see the blessed child and witness the miracle of his birth." Staging the first re-enactment of the nativity, St. Francis started a tradition of live nativities that spread throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. Eventually, statues replaced human and animal participants. "Charles III, King of the Two Sicilies, collected such elaborate scenes, and his enthusiasm encouraged others to do the same thing. In some countries such as Italy and Malta, and many South American countries, the crib is the most important Christmas decoration. Naples is home to the world's largest nativity crib scene. "it's in the 'Museo Nazionale di S. Martino' and has 162 people, 80 animals, angels, and about 450 other smaller objects." There is a special society in Malta that keeps the tradition alive.

What animals were really there is unclear. "Pope Benedict XVI writes, 'In the gospels there is no mention of animals at the Holy Birth. He contends that the references to the ox and the donkey in other parts of the Bible may lead Christians to include them.'" In most scenes, you will see the ox and donkey close to the manger. "Legend tells us they kept the baby Jesus warm with their breath." The donkey, prized for its strength, endurance and sure-footedness, bore the pregnant Mary across the rocky terrain from Galilee into Jerusalem. Some historians argue that Mary and Joseph may have traveled in a caravan, which was seen as much safer than traveling alone. "Mary may have ridden in a basket secured to a camel." The ox is a symbol of patience and strength." It was one of the most important animals in the development of civilizations, providing great strength for agriculture and clearing forests as well as moving people and supplies." Cattle became firmly associated with modern nativity after "the publication in the late 19th Century of the beloved Christmas Carol, 'Away in a Manger' and its phrase, the cattle were lowing."



During the Renaissance, influenced by myths and legends, "artists took license with symbols, which opened the way for more creative approaches to erecting the nativity." You will see sheep in many crèches. "Sheep were the most pervasive animals in the Middle East. A man's wealth was measured by the size of his flocks. Judaic Law declares they are 'clean animals'...sheep represent the natural life that flows into man's consciousness from spirit, guileless and pure." Goats in biblical times had a mixed reputation. "As a group they represented sinners but...a white mountain goat came to represent Jesus in search of the Church. Legend has it that the goat was placed in the nativity scene because of the early Jewish practice during Yom Kippur when rabbis symbolically placed the sins of the people on a goat and drove him into the wilderness." (Hence- the Scapegoat!) The camels were transportation of the wise men from the East who brought the newborn baby gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh. They also "symbolize that Jesus's message would be carried far into many lands." You may also see a dove which represents purity and peace and "the human soul or

Continued on inside back cover

MINIATURES CORNER

By Kaye Browning



The Entrance Hall

I can't imagine how many people and how much time it would have taken to decorate Spencer House in the 19th century. Here in the gallery, it takes a full day to prepare the rooms in the *Spencer House* miniature. Once we remove the glass and clean and polish the rooms for the holidays, we all look forward to decorating it, marveling at the intricate ornamentation that emerges from storage once a year.

Most of the holiday decorations in the home are by Jo Bevilacqua. Her trees have a very formal appearance—fitting for our anchor exhibit by Mulvany & Rogers. I don't necessarily have a theme for decorating the 1/12th-scale re-creation of one of London's finest mansions, but I do try to choose décor to enhance the beauty of each room.

Trees, of course, are key, and most of the rooms include an elaborately decorated miniature fir. In fact, trees set the tone starting from the exterior of *Spencer House*. Inside is more delightful greenery. In the entrance hall, is a stunning tree I found in England. Decorated in white and silver with matching wrapped gifts beneath, it

complements the simple sophistication of this space. The only other color I chose to use in this area is seen in the bright red poinsettias which are featured throughout many of the rooms (much like my own home this time of year).

Another striking example is in the Painted Room where one of our most dramatic Christmas trees takes center stage. I selected a tree filled with various shades of teal ornaments to mirror the blues and greens of the room and I think it works beautifully. The metallic ribbon and white lights add a touch of elegance to this already elegant space.

The Great Room also features a brilliant tree designed to bring out the rich reds of the extraordinary entertaining area. The tree for this room features flowing gold ribbons and ruby colored ornaments of all shapes and shades that sparkle alongside the crystal chandeliers and gilt furnishings and woodwork. I especially like how Gerd Felka's glass blown decanter set on



Spencer House exterior decorated for the holidays

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the Holy Ghost”.

In other scenes representing the birth of Jesus, several cultures add other characters and objects that may or may not be biblical. “Legend says that the cock crowed at midnight in the stable to announce the arrival.” It is a symbol of watchfulness and diligence and is “a sign of renewal and the resurrection of Christ.” There may be a ‘cat of Madonna’. The story says Mary was having trouble getting the baby to fall asleep and a cat purred and curled up soothing the baby. The lion has a legend of lion cubs born dead and 3 days later they came to life. It became associated with the resurrection and the cubs represented “valor, majesty and wisdom; as ‘King of Kings’ Jesus came to personify many of the same qualities to Christians.” “The peacock signifies immortality and resurrection because it was once believed its flesh didn’t decay. It represented immortality of Christ. The eyes on its tail, represents the all-seeing church or God’s omniscience.”



scene before a 20 foot Blue Spruce. If you come to the Kentucky Gateway Museum Center, you can experience “Nativity Sets From Near and Far” put together by Guest Curator, Barb Clarke and the Trinity Lutheran Church. A “MUST SEE” for the holidays! It opened November 26th and will run through the first of the year.

Readers may email questions to Hixson@kygmc.org @ Kentucky Gateway Museum Center, Maysville, KY

The Vatican has displayed a scene in St. Peter’s Square since 1982, and the Pope has for many years blessed the mangers of children assembled in St. Peter’s Square for a special ceremony. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City annually displays a Neapolitan Baroque nativity



The Painted Room

the side table looks when it reflects the twinkling lights and golden shimmer of the tree. It really is a gorgeous room during any time of the year.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and hope you can make it to see our holiday displays in person before they are packed away on January 20th.



The Great Room




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Visit the Old Pogue Experience
TASTING ROOM OPEN
TUESDAY – SATURDAY

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Kentucky Gateway Museum Center
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NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
PERMIT NO. 12

To:

or current resident.

Important Dates:

*December 3, 2019, 4:30pm-7:00pm
Member Reception*

*December 25, 2019
Museum Closed*

*January 1, 2019
Museum Closed*

**GIVE THE GIFT OF
MEMBERSHIP TO YOUR
LOVED ONES THIS YEAR!**

KYGMC HOURS

**Sun. & Mon.
Tues.-Sat.**

**CLOSED
10am-4pm**



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