

Museums eNews | February 2014

Kappa Kappa Gamma
FOUNDATION



ADDED BENEFITS

An added benefit of your Friends of the Museums membership is a monthly e-newsletter from the museums! These are exciting times in the museums and we are thrilled to have you along for the ride. Please take a moment to browse through all that is happening and know that it is happening because of you and your generous support. We couldn't do it without you and we thank you!

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- **Museums Donor Event at Convention** Are you a Friend of the Museums at the Partner level (\$250+)? If so, you will be invited to join the Museums Committee for a special event at the 2014 General Convention in Houston, Texas. [Click to read more](#)
- **Money Matters** The Fraternity and Foundation are wrapping up annual budget meetings! [Click to read more](#)
- **It's All A Matter Of...** Highlights from the collections of The Snowden-Gray House and The Stewart House. [Click to read more](#)

Contact Us!

The Snowden-Gray House and Heritage Museum
530 East Town Street | Columbus, OH 43215
Toll-Free 866.KKG.1870 | foundation@kkg.org
<http://www.snowdengrayhouse.org>

The Stewart House Museum
1015 East Euclid | Monmouth, IL 61462
309.734.5154 | thestewarhouse@frontiernet.net
<http://www.stewarhouse.org>

MUSEUMS COMMITTEE MEMBER RECOGNIZED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



In December 2013, Phyllis White Geeslin, *Indiana*, was honored by the Indiana Historical Society with the Eli Lilly Lifetime Achievement Award for extraordinary contributions to the field of history. Phyllis has been President and CEO of the Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site (BHPS) in Indianapolis since 1993. During her tenure, the organization has made incredible strides in maintaining and restoring Benjamin Harrison's home and property. The original Carriage House was rebuilt in 2001 to complete the historic campus, and a Save America's Treasures Grant paid for the restoration of original wall paper, carpets, sidewalks and ornamental plantings in 2009.

Phyllis also has worked to make BHPS accessible to all members of the public, including the addition of an elevator and elevette to the house. Special tours are available in American Sign Language, as well as for guests who are blind or have impaired vision. Special needs students are also accommodated in BHPS's tour interpretation.

In 2007, Phyllis spearheaded an effort to save a large collection of original Harrison papers, personal items, family history and historic documents from public auction in 2007. This material now resides in the Harrison Site collection, where it enriches interpretation and enhances important stories in exhibits, tours, publications and displays. She also successfully established the Mary Tucker Jasper Speaker Series, at which the Advancing American Democracy Award is annually presented.

Phyllis served first on The Heritage Museum Committee until the creation of The Museums Committee, where she was appointed a member-at-large, advising at both The Stewart House Museum and The Heritage Museum.

MUSEUMS DONOR EVENT AT CONVENTION



During the 2014 Convention in Houston, Texas, the Museums Committee once again will honor Friends of the Museums who support our historic homes with an annual donation of \$250 or more. The program will include breakfast and a very special presentation by Edith Mayo, *George Washington*, curator of the latest exhibit, *Tradition of Leadership*[®] – *Enfranchisement to Employment, 1920–1970*. If you have already joined the

Friends of the Museums at the Partner level (\$250) or above, your invitation will arrive in the mail before Convention. If you have not renewed or are not yet a Friend of the Museums, you may do so during your online Convention registration or directly through this link <http://www.kappa.org/idonate/friends>. Not sure? Just email or call Kylie Smith, *Simpson*, at Fraternity Headquarters at ksmith@kkg.org or 866-KKG-1870, extension 2129.

MONEY MATTERS

In his paper *The Economics of Art Museums* (University of Chicago Press, January 1991), Martin Feldstein states that

*Museums are fundamentally different from other institutions in our **economy and society**. Like universities and symphony orchestras, they play a central role not only in the current cultural life of the **nation** but also as conveyors of our cultural heritage from one generation to the next. But unlike universities and orchestras, they are literally the preservers of the objects of **culture** themselves.*



I'd like to write to Mr. Feldstein and ask for permission to add Kappa to his list. In our own organization, the museums are fundamentally different from all of the other programs created and supported by Kappa Kappa Gamma. And while our museums could easily fit into the arguments he sets up throughout the paper as to why museums deserve our money and our attention, there is one fundamental difference for which I am grateful. Most museums around the world are financially neglected by affluent economies, but we have the great fortune (figuratively AND literally!) to enjoy the enormous support of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation.

The Fraternity and Foundation just completed their annual budget meetings to determine the financial future of Kappa Kappa Gamma in the next fiscal year. As the museums of Kappa Kappa Gamma embark on an exciting path to greater community outreach and educational programming, it's reassuring to know that the leadership of this organization recognizes the value of our museums and supports our role "as protectors of the treasures that our generation has inherited from the past." They're putting their money where their mouth is and challenging us to reach new heights in our museums. It's expensive to maintain buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and even more expensive to invest in developing programs that highlight these buildings and their incredible stories. But our efforts are possible because of generous Foundation donors like you and the thoughtful planning of our organization's leadership. Thank you for recognizing the value of preserving our history and the history of women.

A MATTER OF SHAPE



Victorian-era home goods manufacturing must have made more than a few millionaires. In the 19th century, running an attractive and effective upper-middle-class or upper-class household required an entire inventory of items with very specific purposes. At The Snowden-Gray House and The Stewart House, we have hot chocolate sets, cake baskets, vegetable steamers, and egg poachers to prove it. The newest addition to our collection is a 10-inch Heisey pressed glass pineapple and fan pattern vase donated by Dale Brubeck, *William and Mary*. At first we thought it was a celery vase, but further research indicates it is actually a flower vase. You'll note the tapered shape of the vase, which helps us determine that it is more suited to flowers than stalks of celery. The A.H. Heisey Company was formed in Newark, Ohio, in 1895 and operated until 1957. The pineapple and fan pattern is one of Heisey's very early patterns and was made between 1898 and 1907. Vases like this one are often confused with celery vases and spooners. Imagine purchasing a crystal vase just to hold your celery upright; Bloody Mary makers rejoice!

If you have something similar and are unsure which you have on hand, take a look at the celery vase and spooners below for comparison. Celery vases usually will be rather tall with a round or flattened bottom. Spooners often look like short celery vases.



Spooners and celery vases from the collection of Mitzi Curi

<http://www.mitzismiscellany.com/about.html>

A MATTER OF TIME

The former parlor in The Stewart House, now the Charter Room, is the room in which the Charter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity was signed and the Constitution was written. The room is named in memory of Jean Hess Wells, *Georgia*, President of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity from 1976 to 1980, Fraternity Historian, and the first Fraternity liaison to the Minnie Stewart Foundation. A generous bequest from Jean's estate provided funds used for the renovation. Restoration of the Charter Room began in 1998 and, upon completion, the room was dedicated on October 12, 2001.

On the mantle is an 1860 Seth Thomas weight-driven, eight-day time and strike clock. The rosewood case includes sponge decorated pilasters, gold leaf detail, and rosewood columns. The glass and dial are original and the signed lyre movement has an eagle logo. Thomas was one of the most famous clockmakers in the United States and formed his company in 1813. His clocks originally had wooden movements until he set up a factory to make metal-movement clocks in Plymouth Hollow, Connecticut. Thomas died in 1859, just a year before our clock was manufactured, after which the company was managed by his son, Aaron. An interesting tidbit for Connecticut residents and clock-enthusiasts alike—in 1875, the town of Plymouth Hollow was renamed Thomaston in honor of Seth Thomas.



Louise Lauder Roos, *Monmouth*, and Cherry Lauder McIlvain, *Monmouth*, donated the clock in memory of their sister, Catherine Lauder, *Monmouth*.