

# Shiloh Scrapbook

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 37, No. 3 • December 2018

## MJ, We Hardly Knew Ye

**Allyn Lord**  
Director

It feels wrong to close the book on the life of MJ (Mary Jean) Sell. There's so much yet to be discovered and understood. She was at once enigmatic and yet so fathomable. She could be hard to get to know, deep, and brooding, yet intelligent, talented, interesting, and playful.

MJ served on the Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees from 2011 to 2016. She then sat out a year and returned to the board in 2018. She served four of her seven terms as board secretary. My favorite quote from her board application in 2011 was, "I am trainable."

MJ died on September 8, 2018, just nine days short of her 72nd birthday. Her death date was the day the Shiloh Museum celebrated its big fiftieth anniversary, and I imagine MJ is thinking that she got the last laugh—that we won't be able to remember the museum's fiftieth without remembering her. (And it's true, I probably won't.) MJ loved the museum and spent so much time here that there's almost a tangible hole in the museum's fabric with her name on it.

Born in 1946 to a family of teachers in Midwest City, Oklahoma, MJ attended a number of colleges and universities to help feed her always-hungry brain. One of her earliest passions was journalism, but it was a life path she had to fiercely pursue as her mother and stepfather were infuriated with her choice, preferring she find a more traditional occupation for women such as teaching.

MJ's first journalism course was in high school, followed by courses at the Oklahoma College for Women (Chickasha) and the University of Oklahoma. She was employed by the *Alamagordo [New Mexico] Daily News* as reporter, photographer, and darkroom technician, and did a stint at the Alamagordo campus of New Mexico State University where her newspaper work included interviews with a Nobel Prize winner and with actors Clint Eastwood and Bruce Dern, in town shooting the Western film *Hang 'Em High*. She returned to Norman, not only taking night classes at OU but also working at the *Chickasha Star* newspaper and as a cook at a 24-hour restaurant.



**MJ Sell at the Shiloh Museum's Ozark Quilt Fair in 2013.**

After a short visit to Eureka Springs, MJ moved there about 1985 and served as editor, reporter, and photographer for the *Eureka Springs Times-Echo* newspaper before becoming the deputy city clerk (1990–1995) and city clerk (2002–2010), from which she retired. Eureka Springs had become her home of choice and she was proud of its people and its government.

What's instructive about MJ's life is that she never tired of learning. There was always something new to research, to examine, to master. She took courses at various colleges on such topics as music and religion (and she actually held a

**see SELL, page 5**

We've talked a lot over the past months about the museum's fiftieth anniversary. It's been a year of meaningful accomplishments, among them:

- Special exhibits focusing on fifty years of collecting and fifty years of museum history.
- Opening our seventh historic building, the 1871 Shiloh Meeting Hall, after thirteen years and almost \$1.2 million in renovations.
- Celebration of our connections to community with such projects as the month-long construction of a Marshallese traditional fishing vessel, a *kōrkōr*, in partnership with the Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese.
- Our first History Resource Fair, collaborating with area museums, archives, libraries, and historical societies to help you learn about local resources.
- Near completion of the sixth and final all-new exhibit, marking the renovation of our exhibit hall, including the introduction of labels in Spanish, the first museum in Arkansas to do so.

## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN



**Allyn Lord**

- Welcoming into our family of history-based organizations two new groups: the Dogwood Lace Guild and the Northwest Arkansas Handweavers Guild.
- Numerous special events, including author talks, history films, a milkweed giveaway, and an amateur radio special event.
- Growth of our education programs, including an exciting new program, Arkansas Symbols Day.

It's been a year full of activities and growth, and we honored our fifty years at a Frolic and Family Celebration in September, our

anniversary month. The museum board's dedication to our values of welcoming and inclusion meant both events were free and celebratory. And while other organizations prefer galas, balls, and formal fundraisers, our celebrations were down-home, casual affairs with plenty of food, music, activities, and time to chat, toast, dance, eat cake and ice cream (our signature "Sorghum Swirl"), and simply have fun.

I'm so proud and appreciative of all your compliments and comments. Folks who enjoyed the camaraderie and merriment, and those who said the parties were "so us," confirmed for me that the Shiloh Museum continues to be true to our mission, our values, and our history.

We appreciate our sponsors, members, donors, volunteers, board, participants, staff, collaborators, funders, scholars, neighbors, and visitors. We've reached fifty years and continue to thrive because it takes all of us to remember, tell, and honor our cumulative histories. Here's to the past fifty and to the many, many years to come!

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

David Beauchamp, president; Jim Meinecke, vice president; Kathryn Birkhead, secretary; April Rusch, treasurer; Jason House, vice-treasurer. Dr. Jami Forrester, Zessna Garcia Rios, Dr. Marian Hendrickson, Melisa Laelan, Janelle Riddle, Clifton Ruddick, Mary Jean (MJ) Sell, Hank Taylor, Judy Van Hoose, David Whitmore

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Dr. Marsha Jones, Allyn Lord, Robert Mello, Dolores Stamps

### LIFE TRUSTEES

Dr. C. S. Applegate, Dr. Dwight Heathman, Martha Lankford, Maudine Sanders, Stephen Taylor (*all deceased*)

### VOLUNTEERS (JULY–OCTOBER 2018)

Geri Alvis, Mary Ann Bardwell, Ethna Billings, Kathryn Birkhead, Jamie Bradley, Miriam Grace Calhoun, Noah Calhoun, Ginger Candrilli, Doris Cassidy, Trinity Castro, Karen Cordell, Heather Costello, Tom Costello, Miranda Cousins, Brenda Cox, Georgia Cox, Kyla Cross, Malachi Cross, Nathan Cross, Allison Dillingham, Rose Dollins, Astre Dunn, Abigail Freeman, Henry Freeman, Regina Gabel, Debbie Gilmore, Martha Hamman, Donald Hendrix, Jerry Hilliard, Molly Hutchins, Ann Kabanuck, Cheryl Larson, Craig Larson, Jayne Laster, Mira Leister, Linda

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### STAFF

Allyn Lord, director; Judy Costello, education manager; Marie Demeroukas, photo archivist/research librarian; Walt Gallagher, facilities manager; Michele Gibson, receptionist/store manager; Kimberly Hosey, education specialist/weekend manager; Aaron Loehndorf, collections/education specialist; Curtis Morris, exhibits manager; Marty Powers, maintenance; Carolyn Reno, assistant director/collections manager; Rachel Whitaker, research specialist; Susan Young, outreach coordinator

### SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY

118 W. Johnson Avenue • Springdale, AR 72764 • 479-750-8165

[shilohmuseum.org](http://shilohmuseum.org) • [shiloh@springdalear.gov](mailto:shiloh@springdalear.gov)

Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. • Free Admission



# Volunteer Spotlight

**Judy Costello**  
*Education Manager*



**From left: Museum volunteers Kyla Cross, Richie Whitaker, and Charlie Whitaker help youngsters learn about local history.**

We are highlighting Kyla Cross, Richie Whitaker, and Charlie Whitaker, three of our education volunteers. We're grouping them together for this article because they volunteer at many of the same events and they each contribute about twenty-five volunteer hours annually here at the museum. Kyla has been a volunteer with us for four years, Richie three, and Charlie two. As with many of our young volunteers, Kyla, Richie, and Charlie are schooled at home. This allows them to have flexible school schedules so they can help out with museum programs during public school hours when we most of our programs take place.

A typical education program at the Shiloh Museum is ninety minutes long and is led by at least one education staff member who closely supervises and gives orientation and on-the-job training to our youth volunteers. As the volunteers gain more experience and demonstrate the ability to meet challenges of presenting programs to a variety of groups, they are allowed to take on more responsibility. We are always

proud when a young volunteer is able to take the lead at a station!

During our school programs, we strive to engage students in learning history on as many levels and using as many senses as possible. Kyla, Richie, and Charlie sometimes dress in clothes representing different time periods to help bring history to life for visitors. They perform historic dances. Kyla and Richie each know and can sing over seventy-five Ozark ballads. In fact, their tutor, museum volunteer Lyle Sparkman, has awarded Kyla and Richie the title of "Ambassador of Ozark Culture" for their mastery of Ozark folk songs.

Kyla, Richie, and Charlie serve as guides during our annual programs such as Sheep to Shawl and Civil War Days, events that draw hundreds of schoolchildren. Guides must stay on schedule, move large groups of students from one station to another, and make adjustments as necessary when dealing with large groups of people. We know we can count on these three young people to step up to the challenge.

At our Arkansas Symbols Day this past September, we had over 800 visitors for the six-hour event. Kyla, Richie, and Charlie were each in charge of an interactive station where visitors could learn about one of our state symbols. During the day, Richie helped students milk Buttercup (our life-size replica cow,) and handed out cartons of milk as he taught students about our state beverage, milk. Charlie supervised students stomping plastic grapes and sampling real grapes while introducing them to our state grape, the Cynthiana. Kyla showed students real rice plants ready for harvest, gave out bags of Riceland rice, and dished up samples of cooked jambalaya while teaching about our state grain, rice. Many of the visiting teachers and adults complimented the three young volunteers on their knowledge and enthusiasm.

Besides bringing history to life, Kyla, Richie, and Charlie perform another very important role here at the museum: they inspire other students to learn about history and also to serve their community. 🌱

# DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTIONS

July–October 2018

*Dorothy Fitzgerald Allen:* Photograph of Leroy Pond Army Reserve and 362nd Psychological Operations Group, Fayetteville, 1990

*Anonymous:* Letters, tax receipts, and miscellaneous documents from Washington and Newton Counties, 1890s–1940s

*Brenda Ball:* Framed print of original drawing of 1920s First State Bank (Springdale) by Jane Bowman Crips, Springdale, 1978

*Claudine Barnett:* Stoneware bowl, flour-sack apron, bonnet, shirt collars, handmade rug, rotary telephone, shape-note songbook, and miscellaneous items, all from Mattie Berry Piercy and Bertha Piercy Rife families, all from Benton County, circa 1905–1960s

*Kathryn Birkhead:* Martha Reder's University of Arkansas orientation booklet and pamphlet, 1942–1943

*Ann Blackshire:* Harrison and Fayetteville telephone directories, 1945, 1951, 1956; First Baptist Church membership booklets, Springdale, circa 1980; Central United Methodist Church anniversary membership booklet and papers, Fayetteville, 1957–1982; *The Roberts Record* by Phillip Steele, 1981

*Deborah Brown:* Wallace Tiberghien's Vantress Farms service pins, Springdale, about 1960

*Bonnie Byram:* Coverlet remnant, women's and infants clothing, child's brush and comb, William Wilson's farm records, Whillock Brothers Construction Co. time books, Habberton School record books, all from Fayetteville, late 1800s–1976

*Reeva Clark:* Handbags from Kingston (Madison County), 1930s–1940s, and Fayetteville, circa 1960

*Steve Clark:* U. S. House of Representatives Bicentennial visitor's pass for Mrs. Phil Phillips, compliments of Rep. John Paul Hammerschmidt, 1976

*Nancy Hornor Dugwyler:* Ice scraper and photos from Hornor's Tire and Supply Inc., Springdale, late 1950s

*Ann Engskov:* Brochures, programs, and pamphlets for Berryville and Carroll County events, 1957–1979

*Donna Geller:* Coverlet, two diplomas, and a tintype photograph from the Yoes family, Greenland, mid-late 1800s through 1916

*George Gray family:* Button-style four-poster bed, Fayetteville, 1832

*Madison County Genealogical and Historical Society:* Photograph of Lowell School (Benton County), 1910

*Margaret Johnson:* Comforter made by Dice Ada Jones, Walnut Grove (Washington County) 1930s–40s

*Donna Long:* World War II-era birthday card sent to Gene Long by Pearl Long, Hazel Valley (Washington County), about 1944

*Mike Morgenthauer:* Fayetteville city directory, 1988

*Ann Payne:* University of Arkansas, Springdale, and Lowell school memorabilia; Springdale business ephemera; Phillips Celebrity Tennis Classic guide; photographs from Fitzgerald, Hewitt, and Payne families, early 1900s–2000s

*Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees:* Springdale High School cape, 1960s

*Cheria Simpson:* Writing tablets, Japton School (Madison County), mid-1900s

*Margaret Smith:* Northwest Arkansas Transportation Lines pocket notebook, Springdale, 1949

*Richard Starr:* Survey compass, Fayetteville, 1840–1873

## Photographs loaned for copying

*Russell Burdine Jr.:* Russell Burdine Jr. as a iron-lung patient at the Boone County Hospital, 1950s; moonshine still (Newton County), circa 1950

*Tom Fowler:* tap dancing class, Fayetteville, 1947

*Liz Lester:* Rebecca Ford Mayes, Johnson (Washington County), 1940s; Washington Elementary School, Springdale, 1940s



1800s survey compass, donated by Richard Starr



## SELL

From page 1

minister's certificate). She volunteered with the Eureka Springs Historical Museum for about five years, famously writing many of the scripts for the "Voices from Eureka Springs' Silent City" living-history cemetery tours. She served on the Eureka Springs Hospital Commission, Downtown Network Board of Directors, Ozarks Chorale, Ozarks AIDS Resources & Services, and Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony Opera Guild. She loved all sorts of handiwork, learning and making stained-glass panels, chip-carved wooden Christmas ornaments, and tatting (lace-making). One of the last times I saw MJ, at one of the Shiloh Museum programs, she donned a lace-bedecked baseball cap. I pointed at it and asked if it was one of her handicrafts. In typical MJ style, she just gave me a crooked smile but had a sure-enough twinkle in her eye, and I knew her answer.

It makes me both laugh and cry to remember MJ. The museum board already misses her regular-as-the-sun participation and her parliamentary expertise. We all are the worse for missing her historical knowledge and journalistic approach to life. I miss her early arrivals to, and late leavings from, our board meetings, when she and I had a bit of time to muse over the latest political high jinks, sarcastically comment on local happenings, and learn from each other. Those were the few times I felt I really got to know MJ's heart. (It was MJ who first pointed me to the Writers Colony at Dairy Hollow in Eureka Springs, where I've spent several residencies working on a book and am now serving on their board.)

The month-long construction of the Marshallese fishing boat on the museum grounds last April and May

had a big impact on MJ. She spent hours at a time here, sitting on a nearby straw bale, watching the work and bathing in the restful and natural ambiance of the campus. You could almost see the cogwheels turning in her mind as she observed master carver Liton Beasa's adroit tool use and skills, as if figuring out how she could take that expertise and make it her own. When asked, she even agreed to write the cover story about the boat project for our August newsletter.

MJ, you are missed by so many. Your talents, knowledge, and wit will be remembered. You made a mark on this world that has become a part of the history of the Shiloh Museum. 🍀

*Memorials in MJ's name may be made to the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History.*

## WISH LIST

- funding for two office chairs for volunteers, \$225
- leaf chopper/vacuum, \$300

## THANK YOU!

### ... for these Arkansas Symbols Day supplies

*Tom and Judy Costello:* pine cones, sunflower seeds  
*Hiland Dairy:* milk  
*Walmart Supercenter #144:* gift card  
*White River Nursery:* loan of apple, pecan, and pine trees  
*Sam's Club #4808:* gift card  
*Arkansas Children's Northwest:* first-aid kits  
*Arkansas Forestry Commission:* coloring books  
*Arkansas Game and Fish Commission:* magazines  
*Arkansas Secretary of State:* posters, coloring books  
*Feed Communities:* seed ball supplies  
*First Security Bank:* tote bags, pens  
*Riceland Foods:* rice  
*Tontitown Winery:* grapes, use of stomping barrels  
*University of Arkansas Libraries:* button pins  
*Washington County Historical Society:* lunch funding

### ... for these fishing derby prizes

*Judy Costello:* Arkansas Naturals tickets  
*Lewis and Clark Outfitters:* climbing wall party  
*Lokomotion:* party pack  
*Walmart Supercenters #54 and #359:* outdoor toys

### ... for these "for-use" items (April–October 2018)

*Doris Cassidy:* plants for Searcy House flower beds  
*John Jablonski:* tower fan, blower fan  
*Matt and Hannah Johnson:* use of tractor  
*Craig Larson:* banner vinyl, large-format printing paper  
*Northwest Arkansas Handweavers Guild:* purchase of audio-visual equipment at the Shiloh Meeting Hall  
*SSI/Jerry Smith:* flagstone  
*Truman & Dolores Stamps:* sink and faucet for the General Store  
*Alberta Wells, in memory of Donna Dodson:* back issues of *Newton County Homestead*  
*State Rep. Jeff Williams:* U. S. and Arkansas flags

## ENDOWMENT FUND DONORS

*November 2017–October 2018*

### Memorials

*Curt Bayley*

Allyn Lord

Truman & Dolores Stamps

*Ken Brock*

Truman & Dolores Stamps

*Tom Duggan*

Arvest Bank, Springdale

Bob & Patty Besom

Allyn Lord

Mary Vaughan

*Diana Gerlick*

Allyn Lord

*Lee Roy Horn*

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### Estate Gifts

Thelma Smallen estate

### Honoring

*Judge Jeff Harper*

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### Shiloh Meeting Hall Renovation

Curt & Carolyn Bayley

Bob & Patty Besom

Juanita Boone

Jim & Cathy Crouch

Elizabeth Danley & Beverly Maddox

Dogwood Lace Guild

Hogan Maestri

Marion Chapter, DAR

Steve & Cheryl Miller

NWA Master Naturalists

Pam Redfern

David & Kathy Reece

Ann Schumacher

Henry Taylor

Michael Vaughan &

Kathleen Lukken

### 50th Anniversary

4-H House Alumni

Arvest Bank

Larry Cosand

James E. Crouch

Mandy Crowley

Donnie & Elizabeth Ganoung

Michael & Anita Hamilton

Wanda King

Liz Lester

NWA Master Naturalists

Thomas Pittman

David & Sharon Scales

Margarita Solorzano

Howard Thurman

Tyson Foods

Jerre & Judy Van Hoose

Jeff Watson

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Mike & David Whitmore

Jeff Williams

### Children's Education Programs

Karlene & Ronald Susnik

### History Camp Scholarships

Glenn Jones

### Awards

*Marshalllese Culture Day*

EAST, Inc., Little Rock

*School bus stipends*

Springdale Kiwanis Club

*3D printing—exhibit lighting*

NWA3D

### Adult Education Programs

Flower, Garden, &

Nature Society of NWA

Forest Hills Church

SHS Class of 1958

### General Gifts

Arkansas Community Foundation

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Janelle Riddle

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# Scenes from Our 50th Anniversary Celebrations

Photos by Janelle Riddle  
Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees





## CALENDAR

### CURRENT SPECIAL EXHIBITS

**Through December 15.** *Happy Birthday, Shiloh!*, a photo exhibit celebrating the museum's first fifty years.

**Through January 5, 2019.** *First Person Plural*, an Arkansas Humanities Council exhibit exploring life stories of women throughout the state who came of age in the 20th century.

**Through January 12.** *Fifty from Fifty*, an exhibit featuring an artifact acquired during each of the Shiloh Museum's fifty years, from 1968 to 2018.

**Through April 13.** *Selected*, an exhibit of objects from the Shiloh Museum's fifty-year collection, selected by guest curators from the Northwest Arkansas community.

### UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

**December 8, 2:00 p.m.** Holiday concert by students from the Will Bush Violin Studio.

**December 18–May 18, 2019.** *Stand Up, Speak Out Washington County*, a photo exhibit about protest movements over such issues as labor, education, war, civil rights, government, and the environment.

**January 12, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.** Cabin Fever Reliever, the museum's annual celebration featuring displays by local collectors.

**January 16, noon.** "The 'Peavine': The Story of Northwest Arkansas' Kansas City & Memphis Railway," a program by local historian Mike Sypult.

**February 4–January 12, 2020.** *Instruments of Faith*, an exhibit on the life and work of folk instrument maker Ed Stilley.

**February 20, noon.** "In God's Pocket: The Founding of Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine," a program by independent researchers Juana Young and MaryAnn Kahmann.

**March 20, noon.** "Recent Archeology at Pea Ridge National Military Park," a program by Jamie Brandon, archeologist with the Arkansas Archeological Survey.

**April 17, noon.** "Shiloh Meeting Hall: A Visible Link to History," a program by Shiloh Museum collections manager Carolyn Reno.

**April 29–April 11, 2020.** *Model Homes*, an exhibit featuring handmade model and doll house recreations of real homes from the 1900s.

**May 21–December 14.** *Scenes of Madison County*, a photo exhibit exploring the people and places of Madison County through the years.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The Shiloh Museum of Ozark History serves the public by preserving and providing resources for finding meaning, enjoyment, and inspiration in the exploration of the Arkansas Ozarks.* Adopted by the Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees on February 11, 2016.

### Join the Shiloh Museum Association

- Satisfaction of knowing you are supporting an important cultural institution and helping preserve our Arkansas Ozark heritage, *and*
- 10% discount on Shiloh Store purchases
- Discount on photo reproduction fees
- Reduced fees for children's and adult workshops
- Invitations to exhibit openings and special events

#### ***Consider a gift to the Shiloh Museum Endowment Fund***

- ☐ Check here if you would like more information about the endowment fund.

#### ***Help us save money and trees***

- ☐ Check here if you would like to receive your newsletter by email instead of U. S. mail.

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### Membership Levels

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Please make check payable to: Shiloh Museum  
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