

Uncover hidden history at the library

Patrons often come to the Georgetown Public Library with research questions. These range from finding information about the best dishwashers to detailed genealogical queries. I often fall down the research rabbit hole while completing these requests.

One such request came from a patron seeking to find the connection between Georgetown and Taylor branches of their family. While perusing the 1930 census records, I came across the familiar name Mary S. Bailey. Under occupation was listed schoolteacher, which was expected. The surprise was her husband's occupation listed as courthouse janitor.

I first heard the story of Mary Smith Bailey in third grade on a class field trip to downtown. Born around 1890, Mary earned her master's degree from Huston-Tillotson College. Over the next 39 years she taught at many segregated schools in Williamson County, including Jonah, Round Rock and Georgetown. In 1953, she founded the West Side Kindergarten, the first area preschool to serve non-white children.

Today, the Mary Bailey Head Start Center still operates in town. A portion of the "Preserving History" mural located behind city hall bearing her likeness was painted in 2020, by local artist Devon Clarkson.

When I saw Harry "Bud" Bailey's occupation I became very excited because it reminded me of a photograph that has been in the back of my mind for over a decade. During the 2011 centennial celebration of the Williamson County courthouse, the Sun City Photography Club recreated photographs from the

BIBLIOFILES

Ann Evans

early twentieth century with current building employees. Most of the photographs from the early 1900s listed names for their subjects, except for one 1918 photograph marked only as "janitor." I have always wondered about him and his story. I thought perhaps now I had a lead.

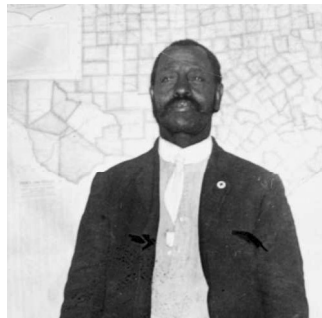
There are a variety of resources both online and at the library that can be used to conduct this kind of research. Deed records from the county clerk are online dating back to the 1830s. This is where I found an affidavit that led to information about Mary and Harry's siblings, parents, their previous marriages and Harry's child from that marriage.

With this information I cross-referenced census records and made sure I had the correct Harry Bailey. I found records of his occupation on the 1930 and 1940 census as well as his death certificate in 1946. In 1910 he was working as a waiter. So far, I have been unable to locate him on the 1920 census to see if he made a career shift during the 1910s. Without that confirmation, I cannot be certain that the unidentified man in the 1918 photograph is in fact Harry and not his predecessor.

The census and the local newspaper are always very valuable tools in this type of research as both provide insight on people's daily lives. Patrons can access the Ancestry Library edition inside the library to access the census as well as other records. The library is also a Family Search affiliate



The "Preserving History" mural is created of two parts; one by Norma Clark titled "Shades of Progress" and this portion by Devon Clarkson titled "Mary Smith Bailey."



Photograph from the Williamson County Courthouse in 1918 labeled only as "janitor."

which provides in-library access to more records than at home users. In the Texas History Room, patrons can access back issues of the Williamson County Sun on microfilm from 1877 onward. Resident cardholders can also remotely

access back issues into the 1970s through Newspaper Archives. Also available in the Texas History Room are local history publications including "Histories of Pride: Thirteen Pioneers Who Shaped Georgetown's African American Com-

What's going on in the library?

- February 1, 10 a.m.: Baby and Me Storytime
- Through February 27: GCCMA Black History Month Exhibit
- February 3, 11 a.m.: Fiber and Friends
- February 5, 9:30 a.m.: SAT Practice Test
- February 10, 5:30 p.m.: Teen Advisory Board
- February 13, 2-4 p.m.: GCCMA Black History Month Artist Talk and Reception

For more information about these and other library events, visit library.georgetown.org/events-calendar or call 512-930-3551.

munity," which includes a biography of Mary Smith Bailey and her work.

Is this photograph of Harry Bailey? I cannot give a definitive answer. If anyone in Georgetown can identify this man, I would love to know! While I may not have found the answer, I am certain that I learned more about the life of a woman I admire and more about the under-told history of the long line of

caretakers of the county courthouse. For that, I am grateful to have gone down the rabbit hole.

Hope to see you soon with your research request!

For library resources related on genealogy and local history visit library.georgetown.org/genealogy/

Ann Evans is the Adult Services Librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

Silk painting techniques explained at February meeting



ART SCAPES

Ellen Greeney

WCAG Meeting

The Williamson County Art Guild meeting is 6:30-8 p.m., February 1, in the second floor meeting room at the Georgetown Public Library. Gwenllian Baldock is the featured speaker on the topic of silk painting.

Ms. Baldock was born in Ireland, raised in Anglesey, North Wales, moved to Oregon in 1999, then Whidbey Island Washington and now Texas.

She paints with dyes on a silk canvas.

"Whether I'm painting landscapes of the U.S. or Europe, or anything else, I hope to convey the joy I experience in witnessing life, in harnessing an idea, communicating the experience, and sharing the sense of awe and discovery I feel, wherever I am," she said.

If you would like more information on her paintings, visit gwenbaldock.com.

Big + Bold

Texas State University, Round Rock campus hosts a new display, "Big + Bold" by Creative Arts Society through April 8. The gallery is located in the Avery Building, 1555 University Boulevard in Round Rock.



Silk painting "Celtic Peacock" by Gwen Baldock, who will speak at the WCAG meeting February 1.



GWEN BALDOCK
Featured speaker

City Council Art

The Round Rock City Council Gallery exhibit theme is "Stripped Away"

by Tim Lowke. He uses repurposing, painting and printmaking into his artwork to create mixed media works of various colors, texture, text and repetition.

Mr. Lowke is the Director of Fine Arts-Visual Arts at Round Rock ISD.

The exhibit is on display through May 3 at 221 East Main Street in Round Rock.

People's Gallery

The deadline for entry to the People's Gallery 2022 Artist Call is February 22. The City of Austin is accepting applications for the People's Gallery 2022 exhibition, which will hang in Austin City Hall from May 2022 to April 2023.

Applicants can submit up to three artworks for consideration. There is no application fee and select-

ed artists may offer their artworks for sale, commission-free. Applications will only be accepted through the online application portal. Williamson County residents are eligible.

For technical support or application assistance, email PeoplesGallery22@gmail.com. For specific requirements, instructions and submission, visit austintexas.gov/department/peoples-gallery.

Selfie art

The Downtowner Gallery is opening a juried show "Art of Thy Selfie." Deadline for entry is February 16. Lauryl Eddlemon is serving as the juror. The show will run from March 16 to May 13.

For questions and more information, email info@RoundRockArts.org. For specific details and entry requirements, visit roundrockarts.org/art-of-thy-selfie.

The gallery is located at 231 East Main Street, Round Rock.

Congrats

Jennifer Polnaszek was honored by the Texas Watercolor Society with a Purple Sage Brush membership pin having acquired 75 points by being accepted and/or receiving awards in recognized competitions.

Art swap pantry

Downtowner Gallery has a gently used art supply pantry - take something, bring something to share with your fellow artists.

The gallery is located at 231 East Main Street in Round Rock; open Tuesdays to Fridays from noon to 5 p.m.

Events

WCAG meeting, Library, 6:30-8 p.m. February 1
Artists of Central Texas reception, library, 2-4 p.m., February 6
Ellen Greeney reception, City Hall, 5:30-6:30 p.m., February 15

Deadlines

"Art of The Selfie," Downtowner Gallery deadline February 16
Peoples Gallery 2022, Austin City Hall, deadline February 22

Current exhibits

WCAG "Reflections," Truewood to February 3
Rand Renfro & Jeffrey Dell, printmaking exhibit, Art Center through February 12

Pam Jernigan's "Colors of the Rainbow," Library through February 20

Glenn Rudd & John Leek photos, Mulligan's through March 1

"2nd Impressions," Downtowner Gallery in Round Rock through March 11

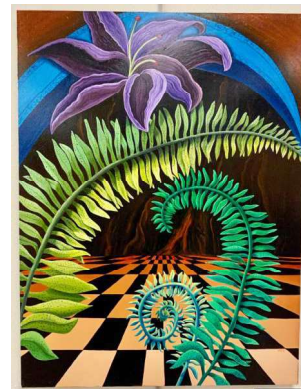
Nancy McElwee's paintings, St. David's through March 18

Artists of Central Texas display, Library through March 24

Ellen Greeney's "7 Continents, 7 Decades," City Hall through March 31

"Big + Bold" exhibit, TSU Round Rock through April 8

ArtScapes is a weekly column for and about local artists and art enthusiasts. Send info to ellen@wilcosin.com



"Plantmania" by Monica Puryear is part of the Artists of Central Texas exhibit at the library.