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Newsletter, Spring 2023

Cedar Oaks Guild

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CEDAR OAKS GUILD NEWSLETTER

Spring, 2023



The April 11 meeting of Cedar Oaks Guild was a work day. After an informal luncheon served by Abi Rayburn and her team Marianna Ochs, Cindy Johnson, and Claire Dickerson, the ladies assembled fairy wands and head wreaths for the May Fest.



Abi, Marianna, Cindy, Claire

The May 9 business meeting featured a school lunch theme, complete with hairnets for the lunch ladies! Toni Paolillo, Marcia Cartwright, Claudia Gleason, Betty Bridge, Linda Noonan, and Emily Holmes dished up salads in a cafeteria line. Remember those days??



Marcia, Claudia, Toni, Betty, Linda, Emily



Behind the Big House: Peggie Roder, Lynne McIngvale and Sharon Schreiber attended the Behind the Big House program in Holly Springs in April. Demonstrations of outdoor cooking, brick making, and the work of the laundress were very interesting. Anthropology students from UM were uncovering part of an old brick pathway beside the Hugh Craft house. While the focus was on the work of skilled enslaved people, some of the tasks, like making lye soap, were probably typical chores back when Cedar Oaks was built. The women thought the event was well worth attending. A video from last year's program is available: [Behind the Big House](#)



Culinary Historian and Chef Michael Twitty

May Fest

The promise of severe weather for May 7, which missed Oxford, led to postponing to our rain date of May 20. Turnout was small, but everyone who attended had a great time, even adults without children! Most people stayed until the end, listening to fabulous music from Greg Johnson and Shaundi Wall. As Suzanne Atkins danced around the grounds, her daughter Jessica served as the Town Crier. Guests enjoyed lemonade and homemade cookies, chasing bubbles, making a May basket, listening to stories read by Marion Tutor and Marianna Ochs, playing croquet, and winding the Maypole. Renaissance style adornments and face painting were available to purchase. Check out the videos on our Facebook page. A big *Thank You* to everyone who helped!



May Fest Store



Craft ladies Carla, Lisa, and Cindy



Small Maypole

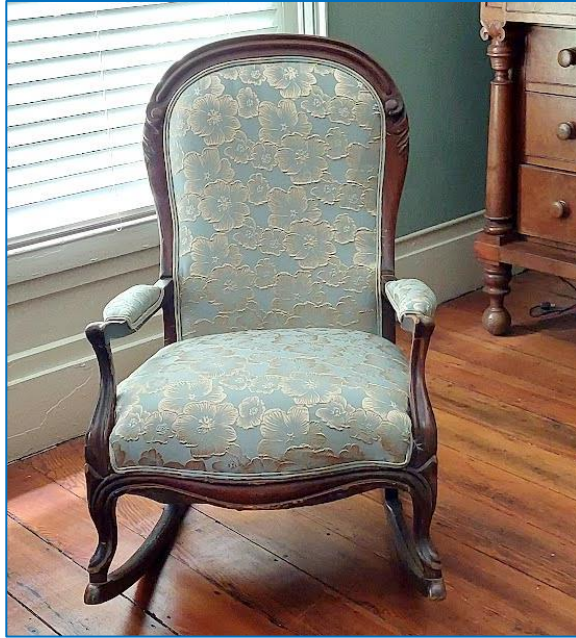


Suzanne, Shaundi, and Greg



The Maypoles were saved for next year!

Furniture: Cedar Oaks Guild has continued to beautify the house by having more of our antique furniture recovered. The rocking chair in the green bedroom upstairs was repaired and recovered, as was the worn, faded black slipper chair in the children's bedroom. The new fabric is stunning. Thanks to Tricia Copelin for making a new duvet for the bed.



Some sharp-eyed Guild members spotted two matching wingback chairs at an estate sale, which have been placed in the library. The broken blue chair will be “retired,” and the wingback chair from the estate of Nancy Dupont relocated.



Welcome to new member **Marcia Cartwright**. We're pleased that you joined the Guild.

In Sympathy: We learned that three ladies associated with Cedar Oaks Guild passed away recently. **Mary McLane** had been an active member of the Guild before she developed severe health problems. Mary passed away May 20 following a stroke. **Mary Sue Tettleton** died at her home in Nashville on May 2. She had been a member of the Cosmopolitan Club, one of the groups that formed the present Cedar Oaks Guild. **Anita Kimery**, a member of the Guild predecessor, the Centennial Study Club, passed away on May 18. Our sympathy to their families.

Happy Spring Birthdays:

Carla Johnson	April 22
Susan Laney	April 25
Robin Buchannon	April 30
Peggie Roder	May 9
Beth Ducrest	May 10
Claire Taylor Dickerson	May 10
Connie Lilly	June 14
Shellie Harrison	June 21
Claudia Gleason	June 22



Rowan Oak: Cedar Oaks Guild will not have a regular meeting until August 8, but Rachel Hudson, Assistant Curator of Rowan Oak, has invited us for a private tour of Rowan Oak on June 13. Famous as the home of William Faulkner, Rowan Oak was also built by William Turner.

Cedar Oaks Treasure: Slipper Chairs

The low, armless chairs have been in use since the 1700s, and possibly earlier. In the book *American Furniture*, Downs mentions a reference from 1436 to *Bakstowylls* [back stools], or stools with backs (98). The low seat height, usually about 12” to 18”, made it easier for ladies in voluminous, restrictive clothing to put on their shoes, or for a maid to assist them. Slipper chairs were normally found in bedrooms and dressing rooms. Antique stores in England sometimes refer to the low, armless chairs as “nursing chairs,” probably with the concept of generally tending to a baby in addition to feeding.

Downs attributed the low height, in part, to the small stature of women. “Feminine costumes prove their wearers’ shortness.” (97) While average human height has increased by a few inches over the past two centuries, other furniture height was not similarly lower.

Modern slipper chairs gained in popularity due to designer Billy Baldwin, who worked with Jackie Kennedy when she redesigned the White House. In *House Beautiful*, Baldwin was credited with “bringing the slipper chair into the living room” as comfortable, versatile furniture. While we don’t have to struggle with hoops and corsets, we are fortunate to have these lovely pieces in the house.

Downs, Joseph. *American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods in the Henry Frances du Pont Winterthur Museum*. NY: Macmillan, 1952

<https://www.loveantiques.com/antique-chairs/nursing-chairs>

<https://ourworldindata.org/human-height#increase-of-human-height-over-two-centuries>

<https://www.earlyoakreproductions.co.uk/news-blog/oak-furniture-history/news-blog-5251-period-tables-height-width.php>

<https://www.duhome.com/blogs/be-a-pro/what-is-a-classic-victorian-slipper-chair-fascinating-history-revealed>

<https://www.housebeautiful.com/shopping/furniture/a39211627/slipper-chair/>

Sharon Schreiber, Newsletter Editor