

Shiloh Scrapbook

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 30, No. 1 May 2011

Tale of the Twice-Warped Towel

Laura Redford

Note: We've known master weaver Laura Redford for years through her involvement with the Northwest Arkansas Handweavers Guild, the folks who demonstrate the art of weaving for hundreds of school children who attend our Sheep to Shawl event each fall. As you'll read below, we turned to Laura for help installing the weaving display in our Working Dawn to Dark exhibit on pioneer skills. We learned a lot from working with Laura and asked her to write an article reflecting on the exhibit experience. As Laura always does when we call on her, she graciously agreed.

You've heard of twice-baked potatoes. Well, here is the tale of a twice-warped towel. First, some background. Last December, Shiloh Museum collections manager Carolyn Reno asked if someone from the Northwest Arkansas Handweavers Guild might help in putting together an 1840s-era loom for an exhibit. Sounded like fun, so of course I said yes, not having a clue as to what was ahead.

The loom had been in use through the 1950s and then taken apart and stored in less than ideal conditions. Several years later, it was given to the museum in pieces. Carolyn wasn't even sure if all the pieces were there. So she and museum exhibits manager Curtis Morris began putting the loom together to try to



Master weaver Laura Redford transfers her handwoven fabric to the 1840s loom in our *Dawn to Dark* exhibit, while exhibits manager Curtis Morris holds everything steady.

figure out what might be missing. When I first saw it on January 8 of this year, the frame and overhead beater were in place. As non-weavers, Carolyn and Curtis had done a good job of figuring out the major pieces.

And then there was this pile of sticks. "What ARE all these sticks for?" they asked. Some were easy to figure out from clues such as the location of holes for tying to the loom or to each other, or wear patterns where threads had worn a groove over many years

of use. But then there were four matching chair legs and a number of other things that don't really have anything to do with the loom. (At least, I don't think so.) We picked out the ones we knew we needed to get the loom sort of operational.

We identified only four heddle bars (two top and two bottom bars) and two foot treadles. We concluded that this was a two-harness loom. I question that conclusion a little but available pieces tell us that it's

see **LOOM**, page 3

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Allyn Lord



When economic times are hard (which they've been) and when the pot of money available to non-profit organizations shrinks (which it has), it's sometimes hard to remember that the work we do to preserve our heritage and provide opportunities

for exploring history is still a priority and a worthwhile endeavor. Staff spirits are often buoyed, however, by the thanks we receive. For instance. . .

About our exhibit supplementing TheatreSquared's production of the play *Sundown Town*: "The museum photos at the WAC annex are really well displayed. Theatre goers are spending a lot of time looking at them." And "Your photo exhibit at Nadine Baum studios was fantastic! Thanks for all the hard work you folks do!" And from a reporter: "I was really impressed with the display in the lobby from the museum. Really good pictures and information...information that I think a lot of people didn't know about."

Someone interested in donating family collections to the museum: "Shiloh Museum is a splendid resource for future generations and we do hope a little of what my ancestors thought worth passing on fits in to your vision as well."

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

STAFF

Allyn Lord, director; Betty Bowling, secretary; LuAnn Clarkson, special projects library assistant; Cheri Coley, library assistant; Marie Demeroukas, photo archivist/research librarian; Amjad Faur, photographer; Pody Gay, education coordinator; Dolly Hayde, weekend assistant; Curtis Morris, exhibits manager; Marty Powers, maintenance; Carolyn Reno, assistant director/collections manager; Victoria Thompson, education and collections assistant; Molly Throgmorton, education assistant, Susan Young, outreach coordinator

Someone interested in the Ozark chinquapin tree: "I got to hear the the podcast yesterday and I was very impressed! Keep up the good work."

On an event: "I talked to a friend yesterday whose daughters attended the museum's Girl Scout event, and he said to tell y'all that the girls said it was the best program they'd attended anywhere in a long time."

Appreciating our value: "Without you, history would be lost. Some of the items you now collect might seem of little importance, but a hundred years from now, that item might be the key for some researcher. So a BIG THANK YOU for all that you have done, are doing, and will do in the future."

About our programming: "I read the article on Shiloh Museum's selection as the Best Museum in the NWA area. I know it is well deserved by all of you for the programs you give and the public events that are scheduled on a regular basis. What a great job! Congratulations!"

From a first-time visitor: "What fun! We had no idea what the museum has to offer, and just to let you know we really enjoyed meeting some of the staff. They are great!"

And lastly, if the use of exclamation points on comments in our visitor log conveys appreciation, we're indeed blessed: "Fabulous! Fun!" "I love the Shiloh Museum!" "So friendly!" "This is great!" And perhaps most meaningful of all, a simple "Thanks."

VOLUNTEERS (NOVEMBER 2011-APRIL 2011)

Ethna Billings, Karen Cordell, Susan Dewey, Tom Duggan, Steve Erwin, Martha Estes, Linda Fulton, Regina Gabel, Carol Johnson, Bill Jones, Mary John Jones, Ann Kabanuck, Megan Kaplan, Mitsy Kellam, Jim Langford, Mira Leister, Amber Little, Pam Redfern, Laura Redford, Debbie Reed, Larry Shivel, Vande Southerland, Truman Stamps, Dee Suchil, Jeanne Tackett, Mary Vaughan, Virginia Venable, Ryan Wells, Joan Wright

MISSION STATEMENT

The Shiloh Museum of Ozark History serves the public by providing resources for finding meaning, enjoyment, and inspiration in the exploration of the Arkansas Ozarks.

Adopted by the Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees on July 13, 2006

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY

118 W. Johnson Avenue • Springdale, AR 72764 • 479-750-8165
www.springdalear.gov/shiloh • shiloh@springdalear.gov
Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. • Free Admission

Loom

From page 1

correct. A two-harness loom is capable of weaving a very utilitarian plain weave but not the “fancy weaves” that you often associate with the time period.

Then we started talking about putting a warp on the loom. All that sounded good but the loom’s structure had been damaged during its pre-museum storage so it really was not very feasible to actually warp and weave on it. I suggested weaving something on my loom and then transferring the partially woven warp to the old loom. And the fun began!

I decided on an off-white cotton towel with blue stripes on the edges. Carolyn suggested we use a cane reed (a comb-like device with openings which keep the warp threads evenly spaced) that had come with the loom. The warp (the threads that are held under tension on the loom) is slightly finer than the weft (the threads the weaver inserts back and forth into the warp). There were no heddles (loops with an eye in the center through which a warp thread is threaded) and probably this loom always had string heddles. There was a heddle jig so my chief engineer, Barry (who is also my husband), made a rough copy of the museum’s jig and I tied 260 string heddles. Three knots per heddle times 260 heddles equals 780 square knots. That job was not as onerous as it sounds. I tied them while watching TV at night.

I put a 5-yard long, 14-inch wide warp on my “modern” loom. (Even though my loom is 140 years younger than the Shiloh Museum’s loom, the “technology” is basically the same.) I was pretty sure this was a longer warp than needed but figured it was a lot easier to cut some off than to try to add some! I left long tails on



Threading the heddle. A heddle is a series of parallel wires or cords used to separate warp threads and make a path for the shuttle.

my knots so there was plenty to work with on the front end. I wove one complete towel and the start of another. Before taking the warp off my loom, I secured the order of the threads, then untied the warp from the front of the loom and began rolling it onto a cardboard tube, pulling the unwoven warp through the reed and heddles (my chief engineer was an integral part of this process.) Just before I got to the end, I secured the warp threads again, cut the warp free from the back of the loom, and finished rolling it onto the tube. It was the back end of this warp that I worked with in putting it on the museum’s loom.

I arrived at the museum with the rolled up warp and a bag full of tools, thread, scissors, etc. I worked on a table in the meeting room where the light was much better than in the exhibit area.

While the towel was a big deal to me, it is really only one part of the larger exhibit. As you look at the textile part of *Dawn to Dark*, you see a

striped blanket on the wall. This is a plain-weave blanket woven in two pieces and sewn together. It could have been woven on a loom such as the one in the exhibit. The “fancy” coverlet hanging on the wall to the left would require four harnesses and so could not have been woven on a loom exactly like this one. (However, looms such as this often had four harnesses.)

Other equipment exhibited includes a spinning wheel, a skein winder, a flax break, and a small cotton gin. There’s a wonderful photograph showing a similar gin in use—it took at least two people turning handles in opposite directions to make it work. Skein winders and clock reels often had a mechanism that would “click” after so many turns, thus measuring a specific length of thread that had been wound onto the arms of the winder. Some claim the song *Pop Goes the Weasel* was a counting song that was sung while working with the winder.

These textile tools were so important

continued next page

to the people who used them. Spinning wheels, looms, and cotton gins were cutting-edge technology at one time. Skill in their use made a difference to a family in how they dressed and whether they were warm at night, and sometimes even added beauty to their home.

As I was threading the warp threads through the cane reed, I wondered about those who had used this very reed before me. As I wound weft threads onto the well-worn stick shuttles, I wondered if it had been a grandmother's task to keep the shuttles full for the weaver to work more efficiently. Was it a child's job to tie string heddles? What had this loom woven? Warm blankets? Christening gowns? Work clothes? Shrouds? Rag rugs? Probably all of these at one time or another

And the weavers. How many tears spilled onto a warp hoping for word from a son or husband at war? What gossip or recipes were exchanged as

the cotton was ginned? What anger was relieved by beating the cloth as it grew on the loom? For the most part, weaving is a solitary task. The weaver's mind could wander away to unknown lands, to fears and dreams of the future. I certainly felt a connection to all those who had touched these tools before me.

So what did I learn? The kinship I feel with all weavers, but I think I already knew that. The most important thing I learned is that I'm darn glad I never had to use a scythe or sickle to cut oats! (That's the part of the *Dawn to Dark* exhibit across from the loom.) It was really fun to be involved "behind the scenes" of an exhibit and I encourage you to do something similar if you get the chance! ♡

Working Dawn to Dark will be on exhibit through January 16, 2012.



The loom as seen in our *Working Dawn to Dark* exhibit, warped with Laura Redford's lovely "Twice-Warped Towel."

Summer Kids Programs!

History Camp

June 20–24, 9 a.m.–noon

For ages 6 to 9 years

Participants will become children of the 1800s and take part in period trades, crafts, games, and cooking skills. Each day features activities from a different era from the 1850s to the 1890s. \$45 for Shiloh Museum members, \$50 for non-members. Pre-registration required.

What a Doll!

July 7, 10 a.m.–noon

For ages 8 to 12 years

Participants will learn to make rag, sock, and corncob dolls. Everyone makes and takes their dolls. \$5 for Shiloh Museum members, \$10 for non-members. Pre-registration required.

Whimmydiddles, Flipperdingers, and Graces

August 4, 10 a.m.–noon

For ages 8 to 12 years

Make and take your own old-fashioned toys. \$5 for Shiloh Museum members, \$10 for non-members. Pre-registration required.

And for kid of all ages...

Let's Play! Summer Saturday

June 11, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Free! No registration needed!

Enjoy low-tech toys and games such as croquet, horseshoes, checkers, dominoes, jump rope, hula hoops, hopscotch, and thaumatropes, plus model train displays by members of the Boston Mountain Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. At 1 p.m., toy collector Bruce Fox will discuss, "Fisher-Price Toys: From the Great Depression to the New Millennium."

DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTIONS

November 2010-March 2011

Jim Barrack: Prints of the Arcade Hotel and old Springdale Depot, by M. Baron, 1981

Connell J. Brown: *Hard Times in God's Country*, 2010

Virginia Cammack and Teresa Roberts: Booklets and paper items from Fayetteville and Northwest Arkansas groups, mid-1900s

Karen Cordell: "Springdale, Main St. of Northwest Arkansas" license frame; William Bennett Brogdon apple production records, 1920s; Callison and Riggs Undertaking receipt, 1930; Springdale High School choir and band recordings, 1970s; Springdale High Class of 1936 reunion photo

Pat Cornish: A.Q. Chicken House ceramic chicken toothpick holder, mid-1900s

Marie Demeroukas: Cincinnati tornado debris, December 31, 2010

Nancy Dugwyler: "Calorie" handkerchief, Springdale, mid-1900s

Nancy Elkins: E. L. Thompson mayoral certificate, 1911; 1909 Springdale High School commencement program; First National Bank of Springdale brochure, 1989; "Mountain Dew" canning label, Springdale, ca. 1950; photo of crowd at Famous Hardware, Springdale, 1930s

Sandy Gray: National cash register from the Fletcher Keck Store and the Pettigrew Café, 1900s

John Jablonski: Huntsville High School annuals, student handbook, *The Eagle Echo*, 1973-1974; Madison County *Record* newspaper, 1972; UA film series schedules, 1974, 1975, 1985; *TV Guide*, 1986

Mary Ellen Johnson: Books, clippings, tapes, photographs, from the Johnson family, 1900s

Tony Johnson: Photo of Rev. Richard Kenner Pound, minister at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, 1884

Bill and Alice Jones: *The Old Gentleman of the Black Stock*, belonged to Lina X. Reed, Fayetteville, 1898

Tommy and Dorlette Kendrick: Funeral booklet for Quilla Boyd Cardwell, 1933; photos of 1917 Arkansas House of Representatives and of Cardwell Brokerage, Springdale, 1920s

Catherine Koch: Records and photos of 4-H and Extension Homemakers clubs, Washington and Benton counties, 1930s-1980s

John Little: Blueprints and songbooks from the Kingston Presbyterian School and Church, 1895 and 1924

Jack and Malinda Lynch: Straw work hat and dress hat of Arley Lynch, Hickory Grove, 1900s

DeMona and Jerry Reeves: Cameron's Dept. Store garment bag, Springdale, late 1900s

Springdale Public Library: Maps of White River Watershed/Beaver Reservoir, 1959

Truman Stamps: Washboard; tobacco pouch; Springdale High School athletic letter, 1940s and 1957

Charlotte Steele: Pioneer-style dress and bonnet worn in Rodeo of the Ozark parades, 1960s; Johnson Post Office mail boxes, 1900s; Phillip Steele's War Eagle Craft Fair booth sign, late 1900s; 7UP crate, mid-1900s

Bryan Lane Thomas: World War II ration books from the Frank Thomas family, Boxley, 1942

Anthony and Frances Thompson: Embroidered state flowers quilt top and newspaper patterns, 1930s; photos of Lily Claypool and the Winfield S. Claypool family, 1900s

Kurt and Gene Tweraser: Fayetteville High School annuals, 1979, 1985, 1986; Woodland Junior High annual, 1981-82; high school and political campaign buttons, 1970s

Dr. Lloyd Warren: Journals and papers of Rev. Oscar Lierly, Fayetteville, 1919-1960

Dorothy Wilson: Panoramic photo of Buckeye Church (Madison County) 1925

Photos loaned for copying: *Tracy Ball, Gladys Brashears, Susan Dulan Hall, Harry and Lydia Joyner, John Little and Janet Little Musteen, Henry Smith, Bruce Vaughan, Jack Watkins, Dorothy Wilson*

Want to learn more about artifacts and photos in our collection?

Check out the "Artifact of the Month" and "Photo of the Month" pages on our website.

Volunteer Spotlight

Ann Kabanuck

I started working in the research library at the Shiloh Museum over two years ago. After coming back to Arkansas from living in Japan with my husband, who is still teaching at a military-base high school, I found there wasn't much employment available. So I went looking for volunteer work, and museum archivist Marie Demeroukas was happy to take on a new volunteer in the research library. She asked me what I was interested in doing, and I basically said, "What have you got?" I was willing to do just about any kind of behind-the-scenes office work in the research library. She said she needed someone to thoroughly break down and re-sort existing file folders, which contained all types of research information related to our six Ozark counties of Northwest Arkansas. It would involve reading lots of clippings, relegating them to proper categories, making new file folders as necessary, and essentially reorganizing the whole system. Well, that was the job for me!

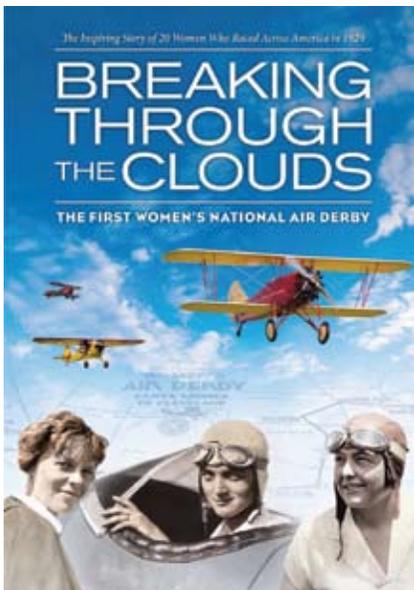
I liked it so much and felt so productive, that I asked to be put on the schedule for two days each week. During my days on the job, I spend a good share of my hours traveling back and forth through time and history and have gotten quite a perspective on Northwest Arkansas. I enjoy working with my Tuesday comrade, Steve Erwin, as well as the usual library team of Marie, Cheri, and LuAnn. I've even been invited to several staff breakroom get-togethers, including birthday parties and some unconventional celebrations (Happy Birthday, Peter Tork!). You just can't ask for a nicer place to work, or ask for any nicer people.

I was raised in the Minneapolis area and then moved to North Dakota when my husband and I got married. His



eventual job search led us to Northwest Arkansas, where we built a house, raised two kids and have remained for 23 years. In all those years of touring the area while the kids were growing up, I didn't learn as much about the Ozarks as I have learned in these two years at the Shiloh Museum. My job really concentrates my focus. I can easily rattle off our six counties in geographical order (Benton, Carroll, Boone, Washington, Madison, Newton), and I usually know in which county a particular city or town is located. My brain no doubt retains a lot of this Ozark minutiae, but unfortunately a lot of it stays pretty well buried.

The Shiloh Museum, in its subtle wisdom, has rooted in me a new and deep appreciation for the people and the land of the Ozarks. I've said it before. I love my job!



Breaking Through the Clouds: The First Women's National Air Derby

A film screening on Saturday, June 18, at 1 p.m. at the Arkansas Air Museum, Drake Field, Fayetteville

In August 1929, twenty women pulled on britches, snapped on goggles, and climbed into their cockpits to race across the country—and to fly in the face of anyone who thought women belonged on the ground. Don't miss the first Arkansas showing of this inspiring documentary with commentary by producer Heather A. Taylor. From 10:30 a.m. until noon, there will be a series of free program on careers for women in aviation. Lunch will be available for sale or participants may bring a sack lunch. Throughout the day Louise Thaden's autobiography, *High, Wide, and Frightened*, will be available for sale and an exhibit booth of vintage aviation-themed postcards and other ephemera (Mary Kwas, collector) will be on display. Co-sponsored by the Arkansas Air Museum, the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, and the Rogers Historical Museum. Tickets are \$6 for adults (\$5 for members of sponsor museums), \$3 for students, and free for children under 6. Tickets available at the door, at sponsor museums, or online at <http://arkairmuseum.org/upcoming-events/breaking-through-the-clouds-film/>.

WISH LIST

For collections

- Furniture dollies (2 @ \$50 each)
- Blanket or other item from the Haxton Woolen Mill, Springdale (1879-1908)

For darkroom

- Nikon SB600 flash (\$175)
- LowePro Nova AW4 camera bag, black (\$75)
- Nikon 55-200 f4-5.6 Edafur lens (\$200)

For exhibit workshop

- panel saw for cutting sheets of plywood (\$700)
- large-format printer (\$4,000)

For education programs

- Large wooden barrel for display in our barn
- Cash donations to help purchase historically accurate reproduction clothing
- Dovetail or box-joint wooden crates
- 100% wool cloth to make living history costumes and blankets
- Cart for hauling living history props (\$350)

For research library

- Boone, Carroll, Madison, and Newton County telephone directories

For meeting room programs

- electric projector screen (\$1,000)
- InFocus IN2116 DLP projector (\$1,000)

Thank you for these “for-use” items! (January-April 2011)

Bob Besom: Hollinger boxes

JV Manufacturing: Cubicle walls and storage unit

Ann Kabanuck: washboard; 48-star U. S. flag

Guy Lancaster: Leave Town and Never Return: Case Studies of Racial Cleansing in Arkansas, 1887-1937

Madison County Genealogical and Historical Society: Pre-1920 Obituaries of Madison County, Arkansas Residents

Bob Madison: Sing Out, April-May 1966

Kevin McDonald: Wooden crate

Laura Redford: Textiles

Caroline Smith: Washboard

Charlotte Steele: Circa 1900 buggy

Bob Watson: 1955 Springdale High School annual

Dorothy Wilson: Issues of *Madison County Musings*



Harvey Trewitt and Doris Leak enjoy a summer day on the White River in 1950. They are boarding a johnboat—a flat-bottomed, square-ended craft especially suited for navigating shallow Ozark streams. *Courtesy Doris Leak*

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Our podcast series is available on our website or at iTunes U.

Recent Donations to the Museum Collection



Clockwise from top left: Joe Bisby, who donated sermon scrolls, books, and a communion set (which Bisby is holding) used by Church of Christ minister Jesse Osburn; Osburn family members Doyle Osburn, Dama Osburn Smith, Sue Osburn, and Lloyd Osburn display one of Jesse Osburn's sermon scrolls; Shiloh Museum maintenance worker Marty Powers cleans a section of post office boxes from the Johnson Post Office donated by Charlotte Steele; Ron Ferguson and his father Melvin Ferguson with Mary Frances (Molly) Bledsoe Ferguson's spinning wheel, which Melvin remembers Molly using in the 1930s.

CALENDAR

Through January 16, 2012. *Working Dawn to Dusk*, an exhibit exploring the lives of Ozark homesteaders

Through September 17. *In-Car-Nation*, an exhibit comparing the Ozark driving experience of 100 years ago with today.

Through August 20. *Settling the Ozarks*, a photo exhibit featuring skills needed by Ozark pioneers.

May 18, noon. "Bee Gums and Flax Skeins: Farming in the Pioneer Ozarks," a program by Dr. Brooks Blevins, professor of Ozark studies at Missouri State University.

May 21, 2-4 p.m. Program and book signing with Springdale author Bruce Vaughan, whose latest work, *Growing Up Rich Though Dirt Poor*, will be featured.

June 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Let's Play! Family Day. See page 4.

June 11, 1 p.m. "Fisher-Price Toys: From the Great Depression to the New Millennium," a program by toy collector Bruce Fox.

June 15, noon. Ozark Ecological Restorations founder Joe Woolbright and local bird expert Joe Neal will discuss the natural history of Northwest Arkansas's tallgrass prairies.

June 18, 1 p.m. *Breaking Through The Clouds: The First Women's National Air Derby*. See page 6 for details.

July 2, 2 p.m. "Under Cover of Darkness: Buried Treasure, Magic, and Deception in the Ozark Mountains," a program on treasure hunter Charlie Gonzales, by independent researcher Robert Myers of Champaign, Illinois.

July 20, noon. "Arkansas Wildlife: A Cautionary Tale," a program by Steve Dunlap, regional education coordinator with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

August 17, noon. "The Folklore of Native Plants," a program by Dr. Al Einert, professor emeritus of horticulture at the University of Arkansas.

August 23-December 17. *Rest in Peace*, a photo exhibit examining death and dying in the Arkansas Ozarks of the 1800s and early 1900s.

September 10, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 34th Ozark Quilt Fair, with new and antique quilts for show and sale.

September 21, noon. "The Huntsville Massacre During the Civil War," a program by Huntsville's mayor, Dr. Kevin Hatfield.

October 3-July 21, 2012. *Whatever You Do, Stay in Print*, an exhibit on the life of journalist, educator, and historian Ernie Deane.

October 19, noon. *Art, Artistry and Eccentricity: Stories of Ozark Tombstone Carvers*, a program by independent researcher Abby Burnett.

November 6, 1-4 p.m. Tontitown Polenta Smear, a celebration of the heritage of this historic Italian community. Held at St. Joseph Parish Hall in Tontitown.

November 16, noon. "Whatever He Did, He Stayed in Print," a program on the life of journalist, educator, and historian Ernie Deane by his daughter, Frances Deane Alexander.

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
- 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.

Email address _____

Membership Levels

- | | |
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