

Old Salem Inc. Presents "The Charms which Ne'er Decay": Historical Southern Needlework and Decorative Arts



The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA), a division of Old Salem Inc., will present a seminar entitled "The charms which ne'er decay": Historical Southern Needlework and Decorative Arts on January 22 - 24, 2004.

Southern women - adult and child; English, European, and African - have been practicing the textile arts since their foremothers landed in British North America. Surviving examples of embroidery from the 18th and early 19th centuries illustrate the latest in English decorative fashion, the influence of designs from northern European settlers, and changes in the popularity of needlework techniques. The textiles they fashioned into clothing and used to furnish their households reflect the wide variety of linen, woolen, cotton, and silk fabrics imported from England, Europe, India, and China. This selection was intended to appeal to every pocket and meet every need.

"The charms which ne'er decay," MESDA's three-day seminar, is a literal introduction to the "fabric" of the South, an exploration of the historic embroideries and textiles made and used in such diverse areas as the Chesapeake; the backcountry of Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky; and cosmopolitan Charleston, South Carolina.

Participants will have the opportunity to study the textile collections of MESDA and Old Salem, as well as learn the basics of research in the decorative arts and the use of primary materials. Workshops, lectures and collection studies will concentrate mainly on the museum's textile collections, but will also offer the opportunity for participants to put these objects in the context of the full range of southern material culture.

Textile historian and author Kathleen Staples will be the major clinician for the seminar. Tours, lectures and workshops will also be lead by members of the museum staff including Paula Locklair, Old Salem vice president for MESDA and the Horton Center Museums.

MESDA's premier collections of decorative arts of the early South include furniture, textiles, paintings, ceramics and metalwares made by artisans and artists working in the South before 1850. The museum also houses the premiere research center for the study of southern decorative arts with extensive photograph and archival records as well as a large library.

Old Salem is the authentic restoration, begun in 1950, of the Moravian community of Salem, founded in the North Carolina Piedmont in 1766. The restoration's museum buildings display the lives and work of men and women that lived and worked in the community in the 18th and 19th centuries. Old Salem is also the home of the Old Salem Toy Museum, an extraordinary collection of toys, dollhouses, miniatures and games ranging from the first century to the 1920s.

Registration in the seminar is limited, and the registration fee of \$350.00 includes all seminar sessions and materials, admission to all of the Old Salem museums, an opening reception, three lunches and a closing dinner.

To receive more details, registration information, and lodging recommendations, call MESDA at 919-721-7360, or email jlucas@oldsalem.org.

City To Use Grants To Extend Activities Promoting Equality

The Winston-Salem Human Relations Department is combining separate federal and state grants with city funds to stage activities promoting peace and equality throughout the year.

In the past such programs have usually been associated with the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, said Wanda Allen-Abraha, the director of the city's Human Relations Department. "We wanted additional funds to extend what we were already doing," Allen-Abraha said.

The city has received \$1,564 from the Corporation for National and Community Service, and \$1,000 from the N.C. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission, to complement the \$5,000 the department budgets for activities related to Martin Luther King Day, Race Equality Week and Black History Month.

The terms of the grants are a good match with the department's goals, Allen-Abraha said. "We're mandated to thread in Dr. King's philosophies to promote equality and peace, to make sure it's in the forethought of everyone's minds year-round, but do that in the name of Dr. King."

The city will use the combined money to fund the annual King Day observance, a Civil Rights Consortium, programming for Race Equality Week, the Black History Month Program and a Community Service Partnership program.

"We're hoping to partner with other agencies in the community that have similar goals and that work for equality for everyone," Allen-Abraha said.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is part of USA Freedom Corps, a White House initiative to foster a culture of citizenship, service and responsibility. The N.C. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission is part of the N.C. Human Relations Commission.

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