

Happy Holidays



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'Christmas Reading': A Holiday Tradition

DECEMBER 06TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

'Christmas Reading': A Holiday Tradition

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

The format is really quite simple – could even be called eloquent if it were not so “hometown.” It’s not glitzy or fancy.

But the annual Christmas Reading in Dexter seems offers a respite from the hustle and bustle and pulls people into remembering the reason for the Christmas holiday.

The Third Annual Christmas Reading was held this past weekend in Dexter. And for a short time, while friends huddled to keep warm, and kids sat by fire pits, the choirs sang, the Christmas story was read from the Bible, and all bowed their heads together for a moment of quiet prayer.

With a large lit holiday tree and large “greeting cards” from the Mathis and Rainey-Mathis Funeral Home families, gathered across from the funeral home for a short holiday community custom.

Greg and Lisa Mathis began this tradition in 2009. Mathis explained to the nearly 300 people gathered Saturday evening that he remembered his mother-in-law, June Coffey, always reading the Christmas story on Christmas Eve to his two boys when they were young. It was a tradition he decided to share with the community.

The reader of the Christmas story is selected by Mathis each year, and he keeps it a tightly-held secret until the program. In 2009 the reader was Jim Hall, whose family home was on the property used for the program. The reader in 2010 was Lynda Lovins. This year’s reader he called a “good personal friend.”

“I can remember him as a child when his father would bring him and his brother to the football field on Friday nights, and they’d both be out butting heads on the truck,” Mathis recalled. “I wondered if either one of them would ever amount to anything. But obviously that both have.”

Corey Mouser, principal at Dexter High School read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2.

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it

was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

Choral music students from T.S. Hill Middle School and Dexter High School under the direction of Jamie Sepulvado sang during the program. And the dismissal prayer was offered by Dale Rogers.

Hot chocolate and cider and Dexter's own "Mrs. Menley's cookies" offered a treat for young and old, as folks shared the special moment and community friendships.

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Christmas Delights Spotlight Home Tour

DECEMBER 05TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Christmas Delights Spotlight Home Tour

Saturday was a perfect day, with sunshine and warmer temperatures as a capacity group enjoyed the annual Holiday Home Tour in Dexter.

The annual Christmas event is sponsored by the Dexter Heritage House Association and this year feature four homes and the Heritage House. The homes included:

- The Matt & Marissa Mills home
- The Crawford-Hampton home
- Long-Brinkley Home
- The Thrower Home

Guests were treated to festive Christmas decorations and camaraderie throughout the tour.

The Heritage House is the oldest home in Dexter. The home was originally on South West Main Street, but due to commercial expansion was moved in the 1970s to its current location near the Der Police Headquarters.

The Dexter Heritage House Association is a private organization that maintains the historic structure. The Holiday Home Tour is the organization's primary fundraiser each year.

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Holiday Home Tour

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Cookie Sweets Make Holiday Dreams

DECEMBER 03RD 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Cookie Sweets Make Holiday Dreams

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

Cookies and sweets during the holidays all awaken the senses to the Christmas season like a warm fire and falling snow.

The ladies at the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Dexter have been focusing on the senses - particularly the taste buds in recent weeks. The seventh annual Cookie Walk meant dozens of tables this Saturday with a plethora of homemade Christmas cookies.

Folks were lined up outside the doors of the congregation's Disciple Center before 10 on Saturday morning. And they waited patiently for the chance to be one of the first to enter the large center and take in the sights - and aroma - of the Cookie Walk.

Once inside, it really was a cookie lover's dream. Trays on tables throughout the hall held rows and rows of cookies. Chocolate chip, date balls, chocolate-dipped Oreo balls, caramel coffee tassies, and more than your eye can take in.

Taking a box and a glove at the front door, shoppers went from table to table - picking cookies in all shapes and flavors.

"Can I have some wax paper," was often heard, with folks wanting a second layer of cookies for their box. Youngsters would eye cookies ... and not decide if they wanted the one loaded with chocolate candies or the cookies with a snowman. Maybe both could go in the box?

And up front was a special table. Decorated not in the green and red of the holiday season, but with pink - pink to remember the fight to find a cure for breast cancer, and to remember of the warriors who lost their battle recently against the disease.

Karen Pippins' friends at First Christian Church had a special table with pink ribbon cookies and a candle burning to remember their friend. Pippins died in November after more than a dozen years valiantly fighting the disease.

Special pink cookies were sold separately from the holiday treats, with proceeds to go to be used as a memorial at the church.

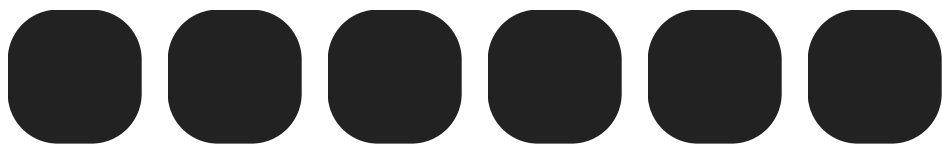
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Cookie Walk, December 3, 2011

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Holiday Homes Featured Tomorrow

DECEMBER 02ND 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Holiday Homes Featured Tomorrow

An SMT Report

One of Dexter's favorite Christmas traditions is ready to help begin the holiday season in the community.

The annual Holiday Home Tour, sponsored by the Dexter Heritage House Association, will be held Saturday, Dec. 3 from 1 to 4 p.m.

The houses on this year's tour include:

- **The Mills Home**, 324 East Vine Street;
- **Crawford-Hampton Home**, 723 Saddle Spur Road
- **Long – Brickley Home**, 209 Holmes Drive
- **The Thrower Home**, 320 Chautauqua
- **Dexter Heritage House**, just off Cooper Street, north of the Dexter Police Headquarters.

When visitors arrive at the home of Matt and Marissa Mills, the hostess will be greeting guests along with Bob Keathley who first bought the home, supervised all of the renovation and then sold it to the Mills. Known for many years as the Webb home, this house was skillfully brought up to date without sacrificing the time period in which it was built.

The home of Brian Crawford and James Hampton was on the home tour two years ago. In the past two years, an extensive remodeling has taken place and is now almost doubled in size with a new sitting room, sun room, office and master bedroom suite. One of the highlights of this home are stained glass windows and transoms, many with a historic background.

The home of Mikal and John is readied for Christmas, cheery decorations will abound, and this historic home will delight guests with trees, collections of holiday items, greenery and candlelight. Hopefully, if nothing is amiss, there will be some special guests, so don't be surprised if a Confederate soldier and ladies in Civil War-era fashions welcome you.

The home of Tom and Lisa Thrower was built in 1952-53. Tom and Lisa Thrower are only the second owners of this lovely period-styled home. The house was built by John and Helen Ringer, and even though the main floor was gutted and a stairway removed, many of the features of that time period remain intact.

Last, but not least, will be the Dexter Heritage House, dressed for the season in fresh greenery, a Christmas tree and other signs of the coming holiday. The house sports new interior paint, new windows on the East side, and the exterior of the home was also painted this past summer.

The Heritage House is the first home built in Dexter. Originally on South West Main Street, the home was saved during commercial expansion and moved to its present location on Cooper Street near the Dexter Police Department headquarters.

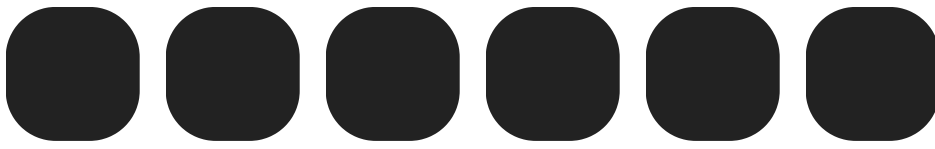
The Dexter Heritage Association is a private organization that maintains the historic structure. The Holiday Home Tour is the organization primary fundraiser each year.

Photo Above: The Dexter Heritage House is one of the five homes featured on Saturday's Holiday Home Tour. The home is Dexter's oldest and is maintained by the Heritage House Association, the sponsor of the Holiday Home Tour. (SMT Photo by Annabeth Miller)

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Christmas Reading Tradition To Continue

DECEMBER 01ST 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Christmas Reading Tradition To Continue

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

A community Christmas tradition will continue this Saturday evening as Greg and Lisa Mathis again host the Dexter Christmas Reading.

The event is simple – yet poignant. With folks gathered together in Downtown Dexter, the Christmas Story is read from the Bible. There are carols, a prayer, and fellowship.

The Christmas Reading will be held at 6 p.m. this Saturday, Dec. 3 across from Rainey-Mathis Funeral Home on Stoddard Street.

The Mathis family began what has quickly become a community holiday tradition in 2009. It is a time to remember what the season is all about, a time for community fellowship, a time to pause from the hustle and bustle to remember and celebrate and share. It's a short event, outside with folks bundled up and huddled around fire pits, and enjoying a few moments of simple Christmas fellowship.

Greg Mathis keeps some information on a “need to know” basis – like who will read the Nativity Story and who will lead the group in prayer.

“Lisa doesn’t even know,” he said. The reader the first year was Jim Hall, whose family home once stood on the Stoddard Street location where the holiday event is held. Lynda Lovins read the Christmas Story in 2010.

Dexter choir students under the direction of Jamie Sepulvado will sing Christmas carols. Following the reading, cider, hot chocolate and another Dexter tradition – Mrs. Menley’s Cookies – will be shared.

Photo Above: Greg Mathis, and participants Lynda Lovins and Cory Mouser, at the 2010 Dexter Christmas Reading. (SMT File Photo)

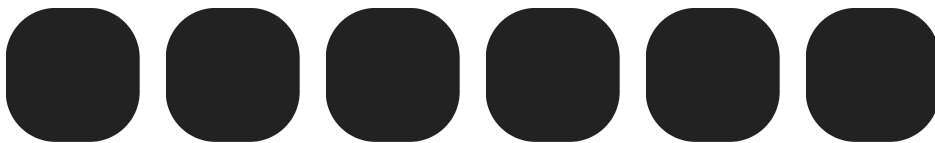
What's Happening

- **WHAT:** Dexter Christmas Reading
- **WHEN:** 6 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 3
- **WHERE:** 130 West Stoddard Street, across from Rainey-Mathis Funeral Hoe
- **WEBSITE:** [The Christmas Reading](#)

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