Happy New Year!

What a wonderful time to be a member of the University Women’s Club! This past fall we have had the opportunity to renew our friendships, network with other members, and develop professional connections at our monthly lunch meetings. Our speakers have given us interesting and informative insights into a variety of topics. There are such exciting programs and educational opportunities all across the University of Tennessee! I want to encourage everyone to attend the spring meetings and recruit new members for our club.

The UWC continues in to “foster community among University women and support education.” We have the opportunity to make the difference in a student’s life by our support of scholarships, food pantry donations, and clothing donations to the Career Center. Our goal for the 2018-19 year is to have 100% participation in our scholarship fund. Please join me in this challenge.

I have enjoyed being the President this past year and look forward to increasing our visibility and increasing the membership of the UWC. Mrs. Ayres had a vision many years ago of bringing the University of Tennessee women together for the purpose of friendship and support, and it is still our purpose today. Please join us!

With warm regards and best wishes for 2019,

Sharon

Meet Regina Dean, Our UWC 2019-2020 President

I’m Regina Dean, the Director/General Manager of WUOT Public Radio, and I’m delighted to be the incoming president of the University Women’s Club. Several years ago, a UWC member reached out to me and encouraged me to join this organization which was founded in 1912 and continues its century-long tradition of providing women with UT affiliation the opportunity to gather and build friendships.

I especially enjoy club luncheons featuring women from throughout the University who discuss all kinds of interesting programs and research going on at UT—programs which few of us know about. UT is a BIG place and unfortunately, I rarely stray very far beyond my own corner of campus. UWC gives me the opportunity to meet and interact with women with whom I would never have crossed paths on my own!

In 2018, there were 10,088 University of Tennessee Knoxville faculty, staff and service employees and almost half (46%) are women! Add to that, retired UTK female employees, alumnae, and wives of faculty and staff, and there are a LOT of interesting women involved with UT. The UWC is a fantastic way for us to come together at a convenient time and locale to meet and learn from each other.

I look forward to a great year ahead!

Sincerely,

Regina Dean
2018-19 UWC Board Members*

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svcsmith@yahoo.com
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2nd Vice President, Yearbook: Erin Horeni-Ogle**
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*All phone numbers are in area code 865.
**We will miss Web and Yearbook Chair, Erin Horeni-Ogle, who has been Development Director for the UT Libraries for seven years. Erin has moved to Atlanta to take a new job at Emory University.

Save the Dates for Our Spring Luncheons

Make your plans to attend the UWC’s February and March 2019 luncheon meeting. As usual, we will meet on the second Friday of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the UT Visitors Center. Lunch will be $15.

On February 8, 2019, Dr. Shelley Binder, Associate Professor of Flute in the UT Department of Music, will discuss “Surviving the Titanic: the Titanic’s Connection to UT.” Dr. Binder graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Cincinnati Conservatory, Virginia Commonwealth, and, for her Doctor of Music degree, Florida State University.

In the fall of 2017, Dr. Binder taught a First-Year Studies course at UT about the Titanic. Her interest in the Titanic arose because her great-grandmother and great uncle were passengers in 1912 on the ill-fated ship. Their story of survival caused Dr. Binder to delve into research and assemble a class for UT freshmen that touches on immigration, class structure, globalization, and survival. Among her family’s treasures was a scarf that Madelaine Astor, wife of John Jacob Astor (who died in the disaster), gave to Dr. Binder’s ancestor to help keep her young son warm.

On March 8, 2019, Dr. Shea Kidd Houze will tell us about “Student Recruitment and Student Life at UT,” describing how students and student recruitment have changed throughout her career and highlight initiatives at UT to recruit exceptional students and help them thrive.

Dr. Kidd Houze came to UT in 2018 as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life and Dean of Students. She holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology and research from the University of Memphis. She has additional degrees from the University of Georgia and the University of Southern Mississippi. In her role at UT Dr. Kidd Houze oversees eight departments in the Student Life Office.

Watch for your postcard reminders in the mail and send in your reservation as soon as you can!
The Greenwood Mural

By Audrey A. Duncan, UWC Historian

Viewing the new University Student Center recently, I wondered what had become of the controversial mural that had adorned the ballroom of the old building. This question took me on an interesting adventure as I followed its history from several different sources and different locations. It was the case of following the mystery of a historical gem.

The History of Tennessee, also known as the Greenwood Mural, or the Singing Mural, was created by artist Marion Greenwood, who had come from New York to the University of Tennessee Art Department as an artist-in-residence in 1954. Greenwood painted the mural to represent the history of music in Tennessee.

The 29-by-6-foot mural is oil on canvas and weighs some 300 pounds. It hung in the ballroom of UT's Carolyn P. Brown University Center from 1954 until July 1972.

Dividing the state into its three divisions, the mural depicts Mississippi River jazz and blues players, as well as slave spirituals of West Tennessee; a country hoedown with dancers and musicians in Middle Tennessee; and, on the right side, the religious-based Appalachian music of East Tennessee. A powerful expressive painting with dominant figures, and bold colors, it resembles works of Diego Rivera, an artist I really love, particularly his murals in Mexico City, as well as others around the U.S. (in the Rivera Court of the Detroit Museum of Art, for example).

Greenwood started mural paintings while living in Mexico in her twenties, where she met Rivera and actually worked with him for some time. Many of us admired her work as we passed through the Student Center in the 1960s. She used faculty and students as models for some of the characters; for instance, the late LeRoy Graf of the history department posed for the preacher in the Appalachian scene.

However, some 15 years later, debate began over what some believed to be the mural’s potentially racist qualities. One of the mural’s 28 figures, in particular, was said to depict a slave picking cotton. To quote Mike Berry, manager of the UT Downtown Gallery,

“The fact of the matter is, when she painted this in 1954, Knoxville was still segregated; UT was an all-white campus.” So for her to...have a third of the mural feature African Americans...when you put that in context, that’s pretty progressive. To most modern-day viewers, the cause of former controversy is lost.”

Middle Tennessee dancers

The controversy continued into the late 1960s, when the protests against the Vietnam War joined ongoing protests over civil rights. In May 1970, the painting was vandalized with paints and solvents. After the painting was repaired, new threats were made against it; so, in 1972 it was covered by the ballroom’s
paneling. The paneling was removed in 2006, and the UT’s Issues Committee and Visual Arts Committee held a forum entitled “The Greenwood Mural Project” to discuss race and censorship. In January 2007 the mural was covered with Plexiglas and curtains, and a search began for a new home.

The next phase in the mural’s history came when the University Center was demolished to make way for the much larger Student Center. A New York firm, EverGreene Architectural Arts, was hired to clean the mural and remove it from the cinder block wall. Mike Berry told me this was an arduous job as bits of the canvas were stuck to the wall. The problem of how to handle and move such a large canvas without damage to it was eventually solved by rolling it around a huge tube of the type used to form pillars at building sites.

The search began to find a permanent place for it on campus, or alternatively, to find a museum that would take it as a permanent loan from the University. Melissa Shivers, who was then Chancellor for Student Life, chaired the committee charged with reviewing and planning what should happen to all the art in the old University Center. She came up with the idea of temporarily storing the mural in UT’s Downtown Art Gallery.

In 2014, after the mural was moved to the Downtown Gallery, Sam Yates, director of UT’S Ewing and Downtown Galleries, scheduled a summer showing that spanned three First Fridays, putting on view two Greenwood murals: Man’s Partnership with Nature and The History of Tennessee along with Greenwood’s related compositional sketches, and unrelated drawings and prints.

Downtown Gallery Manager, Mike Berry, told me that the exhibit was an overwhelming success, drawing in more people than any other exhibit. People were so pleased to see the mural, in part because so many rumors had floated around—that it was all black, all slaves, racist—but the 2014 visitors could not understand what all the fuss had been about.

After the show ended, the UT committee found a home for the History of Tennessee. It was moved to the Knoxville Museum of Art (KMA) on permanent loan. Other paintings and lithographs created by Marion Greenwood went to the UT Ewing Art Gallery, and the second mural, completed in 1940 and measuring 4 by 13 feet, went on loan to the United States Post Office in Crossville Tennessee.

Today, the Greenwood Mural, of such historical value, may be seen on the third floor of the KMA. We may hope that in the not-too-distant future UT will have its own larger gallery with the Singing Mural returning to campus as the gallery’s centerpiece.

Membership Updates

Additions and Changes to 2018-2019 Yearbook Listings

Priscilla Bright, 12047 Woodhollow Ln., Knoxville, TN 37932, 671-1081, pbright@utk.edu
Joan Creasia, 605 Scotswood Cir., Knoxville, TN 37919 805-9698 jcreasia@utk.edu
Margeaux Emery, 306 Richmond Ave., Knoxville, TN 37921 (new address)
Naomia Holloway, 2720 Tarleton Ave. Knoxville 37914, 684-6577
Lisa Johnson, 1204 Willow Grove Dr., Knoxville, TN 37932, 441-6860, lisaj1304@gmail.com
Kathleen (Zibbie) Kerin, 530 Riverfront Way, Knoxville, TN 37915, 898-5909, zkerin@utk.edu
Lynn Kleinfelter, 2004 Velmetta Cir., Knoxville, TN 37920, 577-7215
Greer Litton Fox, 413 Cutlass Rd., Knoxville, TN 37934, 679-4018, glfox@utk.edu
Julia Malia, 5514 Sunset Rd. E., Knoxville, TN 37914 673-6184, jmalia@utk.edu
Margaret Scanlan, 1501 Campbell Station Rd., Knoxville, TN 37932, 693-5704
Megan Venable, 1609 Melody Ln., Knoxville, TN 37912, 591-5912, mvenable@tennessee.edu
Laurie Williams, 1515 Kenesaw Ave., Knoxville, TN 37919, lauriektwilliams@gmail.com

Contact Information Changes

Wendy Wortham, email: wendywortham@comcast.net
Natalie Smith, email: nataliesmith64@hotmail.com
Verna McLain, prefers cell phone: 659-0612
Members Enjoy the 2018 Holiday Reception

On December 5, the Office of the Provost hosted UWC members for a pleasant afternoon of music, food, and camaraderie. UTK’s new Provost, Dr. David Manderscheid, greeted the guests. The musical entertainment was provided by the UT Faculty Jazz Trio—Mark Boling, guitar, Jon Hamar, bass, and Keith Brown, drums. Heather Cockrum of the Office of the Provost worked with the UWC reception chair, Stacy Palado, to plan the event.

Martha Lee Osborne and Joan Johnson at a table in front of the McClung Egyptian Gallery

Regina Dean (right) with Therese and Ron Leadbetter

The Shoffners—Marty (standing) and Dava (at right) with Kathy Conlon and Joan Creasia

Topic Luncheon December Meeting

Mark Your Calendar for Future UWC Events

February 8: Dr. Shelley Binder, Associate Professor, Department of Music. Topic: “Surviving the Titanic—the Titanic’s Connection to UT”

March 8: Dr. Shea Kidd Houze, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students. Topic: “Student Recruitment and Student Life at UT”

April 12: Spring Luncheon, Cherokee Country Club

Note: All luncheon meetings are from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

To learn more about UWC activities—past, current, and future—go to our website: universitywomensclub@utk.edu