

# The Window Pane

Brazoria County Historical Museum

100 East Cedar Street  
Angleton TX 77515

## Dr. John Lienhard to speak on April 18th

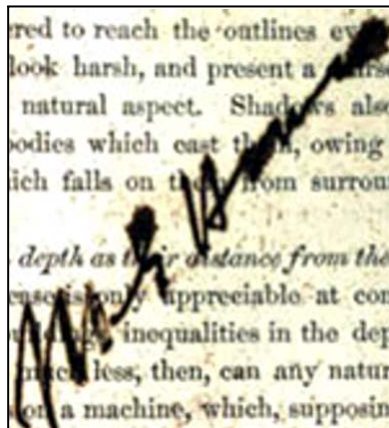
Join the Brazoria County Historical Museum on Tuesday, April 18, at 6:30 p.m. to hear Dr. John Lienhard, Professor of Engineering at the University of Houston and host of the KUHF's "Engines of Our Ingenuity," speak about the remnants of past readers that he has found in old textbooks and what these clues or "ghosts" can tell us about world history. The evening's program will include a short lecture followed by a question and answer period as well as an opportunity for visitors to look for "ghosts" in the Museum's archival materials. Thanks to Museum Board member Joe Bodden and his wife, Cheryl, Dr. Lienhard's talk is free and open to the public.

The explosion of literacy and mass-produced, inexpensive books in nineteenth-century America helped fuel one of the greatest expansions in technical capacity in the history of the world. These books allowed anyone to learn the techniques that could turn ideas into reality, from improvements in complex engineering to domestic life and agriculture. Many of the people who read these books left behind little marks that they were there. These "ghosts" turn up today and can reveal

more about how our nation was formed than one might realize at first.

Dr. Lienhard also will talk about this key theme in his new book *How Invention Begins: Echoes of Old Voices in the Rise of New Machines*, which is due out in June 2006.

The book explores the inspirations of the people behind the inventions that changed America. Dr. Lienhard demonstrates how the juxtaposition of literacy and mass printing helped fuel the spirit of the times in the growth and development of America.

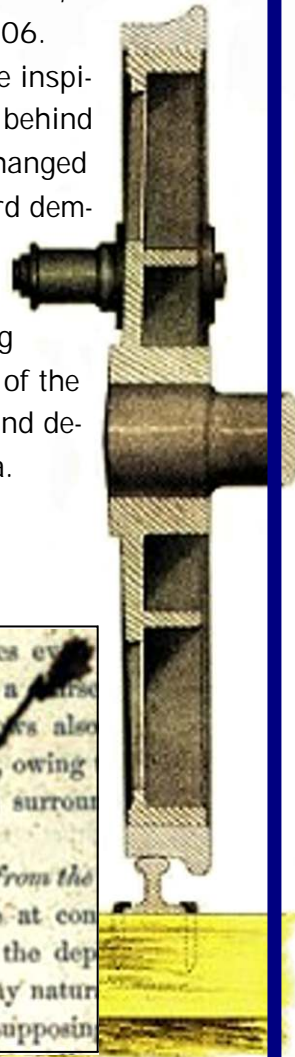


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Has it been a while since your last visit?

Stop by the Museum, say hello, and check out our new exhibits as well as the latest arrivals in the Windows Bookstore.



## New and Renewing Members

### New Members

#### La Familia

Ms. Robyn S. Cochran, Lake Jackson  
Bruce & Kandy Taylor-Hille, West Columbia

#### El Tejano

Mr. Bruce Breeding, Houston  
Mr. Lyle Broemeling, Pearland  
Ms. Billye Downing, West Columbia

#### Senior

Ms. Dodie Bradley, Angleton  
Ms. Gale Kaufman, Washington, DC  
Ms. Dorothy Wilbeck, Angleton

### Recent Renewals

#### El General

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald D. Andrews, Lake Jackson  
BARTA Brothers, Damon  
Mr. Paul G. Bell, Houston  
Mr. J.T. Stratton Brock, Katy  
Ms. Estelle Brubaker, Lake Jackson  
Mr. John A. Moorman, Williamsburg, VA  
Henry W. Munson, Angleton  
Ms. Jo Parish, Angleton  
Mr. Ben B. Turner, Jr., Houston  
Ms. Pat M. Woods, West Columbia

#### La Familia

Mr. & Mrs. James A. Allan, Freeport  
Mr. & Mrs. George Andrus, Angleton  
Mr. William G. Baskin, Lake Jackson  
Mr. & Mrs. George Buchta, Damon  
Mr. J.W. Featherhoff, West Columbia  
Mr. & Mrs. Doyle Fenn, Manvel  
Mr. Robert Giesecke, Alvin  
Mr. Leland B. Kee, Angleton  
Ms. Ruth Lauzon, Angleton  
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Miller, Freeport  
Ms. Christine Palmer, Lake Jackson

Mr. & Mrs. William K. McDaniel, Angleton  
Ms. Sue Gross & Mr. Robert Schlemmer, Lake Jackson

Mr. & Mrs. A. G. Snelgrove, Lake Jackson  
Mr. & Mrs. Irving Zelade, Lake Jackson

#### El Tejano

Mr. Clifton Dusek, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Linda Haynes, Pearland  
Ms. Charlene Hurta, Angleton  
Ms. Marie Beth Jones, Angleton  
Ms. Carolina Loa, Clute  
Ms. Martha C. Munson, Angleton  
Ms. Eleanor S. Vaughan, Lake Jackson

#### Senior

Ms. Peggy J. Baker, Angleton  
Mr. Alfred B. Beers, West Columbia  
Mr. P.D. Campbell, Pearland  
Ms. W. M. Choate, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Ray Pearl Condry, Angleton  
Ms. Jauanita Henry, Angleton  
Ms. Harriet Hens, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Helen S. Horton, Pearland  
Ms. Katherine Lansford, Alvin  
Ms. Lorene Lucas, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Mary Eloise McNeill, Brazoria  
Ms. Beverly Nixon, Freeport  
Charlie & Wilma Ogilvie, West Columbia  
Ms. Ellen Pedisich, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Irma Phillips, Brazoria  
Mr. Alexander Pratt, La Marque  
Mr. John Rathburn, Jones Creek  
Mr. Earl Roberts, Bay City  
Ms. Lena Joyce Steele, Angleton  
Ms. Mary Ann Thomas, Angleton  
Dr. Frederick C. Turner, Lake Jackson  
Ms. Evelyn Welsh, West Columbia  
Mr. Robert L. Wright, Houston

## Museum Staff

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Thanks to Killum Pest Control for their donated services to the Museum.

## Adriance Library & Research Center

After the 1900 Storm, Charles M. Wertz and his wife Flora attempted to gather up the scattered pieces of lumber that had been their home near Austin Bayou. They were able to build "a two -room shanty" but then decided to relocate elsewhere. Their two girls, Gladys and Nadine, were sent to high school in Houston. Soon Charles and Flora and their boys, Louis and Leo, moved briefly to Angleton and later to Bonney. In Bonney, the Wertz family became fast friends with the Frank Turner family. This friendship continued long after the Wertz family left Brazoria County.

While living in Bonney, Louis and Leo became ill; Louis died. This was in 1902, when Louis was five years old. We know that Charles and Flora had begun to think of leaving this area, because they buried Louis in the front yard of their Bonney home so that they could take his little coffin with them when they moved away. The next year, Charles put the Bonney house up for sale, but the best offer he had for it was only fifty dollars. He decided to take the house apart, board by board, and number the pieces for shipment to Purcell, Oklahoma, where he rebuilt it. The house, with a later addition, is still standing there today (see photo).

I had heard this interesting story before, about the house that was moved in pieces and reassembled in Oklahoma. In 1996, a grandson of Charles Wertz who bears his name, contacted the Museum Library to inquire about a photograph. He wanted to know if we had an image of the Wertz home before it was moved to Oklahoma. He also told the story of how the house had been moved piece by piece and rebuilt there.



We have been unable to locate a photograph of the Wertz family's home in Bonney before it was moved in 1903. If anyone reading this knows of such a photo, please contact Jamie Murray in the Museum Library. Bonnie Schuster, the Wertz descendant who sent us Gladys' memoir last year, has provided us with photos of Gladys and her family. Bonnie also sent us two images of the Wertz home after it was moved to Oklahoma. It would be nice if we could reciprocate and provide Bonnie and her cousin Charles with an additional photograph of the house when it stood in Bonney to add to their family photo collection.

While we are on the subject of looking for photographs, I hope that someone can provide us with a photo of the students at the University of South Texas, also known as Noblett's College, in Angleton. This is the school that was begun in 1897 by Dr. W.T. Noblett and was closed abruptly three years later after the 1900 Storm, which demolished the building. I know that such a photograph exists because my great-aunt Mary Kennedy Giesecke once showed one to me that was taken when she was a student there as a child. It is our hope that if this is the school in Angleton attended by Gladys Wertz and her sister Nadine, we may be able to pick them out of the group of unidentified children. James Creighton's paragraph about Noblett's College in the *Narrative History of Brazoria County* states that Henry W. Munson also was a student there, so perhaps there is a copy of this photograph in the Munson family's photo collection.

In the past two issues of the Museum newsletter, I have hit only the highlights of Gladys Wertz Clark's wonderful memoir. It is less than thirty pages long, and just nine pages of it deals with the Wertz family's experiences in Texas, but I enjoyed reading about her life both before and after the years spent in Brazoria County. Her memoir resides in the newly created Wertz family file in the Museum's Adriance Library and Research Center and is waiting there to be read by all who love a good story.

Jamie Murray



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77515

Happy Arbor Day !

## A Mighty Long Trip for a Beer Bottle

A Museum patron recently donated a beer bottle that traveled from the Atlantic Ocean, across the Gulf of Mexico, and ended up at Surfside Beach. The donor related the story of how he found the bottle in the early 1960s, when as a youngster he was playing on the beach at Surfside. He opened the sealed bottle and found a certificate for *fo@valtine*. The donor then put his new found treasure away for safe keeping, where it was forgotten until recently. Upon rediscovering the bottle, he called the Museum seeking information about it and inquired as to whether or not the Museum might be interested in it for the collection. From the description the donor gave, it seemed that the bottle was indeed a unique item.

The bottle was one of 150,000 specially designed and manufactured by the Guinness Exports, Ltd. for its bicentennial anniversary in 1959. The promotional concept came from the genius of the managing director, A.W. Fawcett. His idea was to drop bottles off the coast of Great Britain with messages sealed in the bottle. For those people lucky enough to find one of the bottles, the "messages" were coupons for free beer or products. Fawcett masterminded two of these "bottle drops." The first was in 1954, when 50,000 Guinness bottles were dropped into the ocean. The second, and larger drop, was done in 1959 with a special bottle created by United Glass, Ltd. England. This bottle had on it a beautiful map of the Atlantic Ocean with the British Isles and America in relief. The bottles were dropped overboard in cases of forty-five bottles each; the cases were designed to disintegrate in the sea-water. Over the years bottles have been found on the eastern Canadian and United States seaboards, along the Gulf Coast, the Bahamas, Tahiti, and Mexico. These bottles still make an appearance every so often because many floated north and were trapped in Arctic ice floes; as they melt, a bottle is occasionally released and continues its trip through the Atlantic.

*Michael Bailey*

