The Winedale Story
Collectors and Restorers

The movement to preserve and restore historic structures in America began in the 1890s with the efforts of Ann Pamela Cunningham of South Carolina to save Mount Vernon. Since that time, women have played leading roles in cultivating the historical legacy of their own regions. The Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT), founded in 1891, was the first statewide organization in Texas to seek to preserve the history of the Republic. Early activists in the Texas preservation movement included Adina de Zavala, Clara Driscoll, and Ima Hogg. Their legacy of public service has been carried on by heritage groups and historical societies across the state.

Possessing a natural eye for excellence, Ima Hogg built outstanding collections of antique furniture and decorative arts and acquired historical structures in which to display them. She also took active roles in various historical organizations, serving on the State Historical Survey Committee, helping to maintain the historic Governor’s Mansion in Austin, and founding the Harris County Heritage and Conservation Society. In 1936, Miss Hogg won the Louise D. Crownsnield Award for her “supertative achievement in the preservation and interpretation of sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities significant to American history and culture.”

Miss Hogg donated several important properties as public museums and parks. These include her own Bayou Bend home in Houston, the Varner-Hogg Plantation in West Columbia, her parents’ first home in Quitman, and the restored Lewis-Wagner House at Winedale.

Hazel G. Ledbetter (1902-1992), an avid Houston collector and a close friend of Ima Hogg, was attracted to Round Top’s rural setting as a fertile field for real estate sales to urbanites seeking rural retreats. In 1961, Hazel Ledbetter bought the old Lewis-Wagner House and convinced Ima Hogg to buy and restore it. She donated the Koenig house, now known as Hazel’s Lone Oak Cottage, to Winedale in 1965.

Faith Bybee (1900-1996), a lifelong collector of fine American antiques, was instrumental in focusing the interest of Houstonians on Fayette County. Like Ima Hogg, with whom she engaged in a friendly rivalry, Faith Bybee acquired furniture and then collected houses in which to display it. She and her husband, Houston banker Charles L. Bybee, established the Texas Pioneer Arts Foundation in Round Top in 1967 to oversee the collection of furnishings and the restoration of houses in the area. Henkel Square, named for Round Top’s first mayor, features a complex of twelve of Faith Bybee’s restored buildings.

Ima Hogg, Hazel Ledbetter, and Faith Bybee together helped to create an appreciation and a market for Texas crafts and furniture in the 1960s. Their efforts set a high standard for future collections.