

# The Augusta Chronicle

## Quilt exhibition pays homage to 'a wonderful person'

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The Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History's annual quilt exhibition will feature the Essie McManus Quilting Guild.

The guild, based in Johnston, S.C., was founded in 1999 after the woman for which it's named passed away, said Wanda Wilson, the guild's president. McManus was 94 years old.

"She was a wonderful person," said Wilson, noting that McManus taught her how to quilt.

"As she taught me how to quilt, our friendship really grew. Her teaching style was like none other, because she didn't just teach, she talked with you. That was her -- always willing to share."

During one of their quilting sessions, McManus requested something of Wilson -- that she continue the art of quilting.

"She wanted her girls to continue to quilt. Quilting was an intricate part of her life and she knew that it was a way of bonding together and bringing closeness and creating friendships," she said. "She didn't want quilting to become a lost craft."

The exhibition opens Friday and will be on display through Dec. 31. A senior luncheon will be held Oct. 13 and will feature guest speakers from the guild who will talk about quilting.

The guild will have 16 quilts on display. Two of them were created by McManus, said Wilson.

"Her quilts are really interesting because they feature the characteristics of the time," she said.

The museum holds the annual exhibition as a way to highlight the art of quilting, said Christine Miller-Betts, the museum's executive director.

"There are so many people in the Augusta community and surrounding areas who quilt and the exhibition gives them an opportunity to share with others. It's also an opportunity for people to learn about quilting and see all the wonderful things you can do with it," she said.

The exhibition will also feature quilts from Beulah Grove Baptist Church, Tabernacle Baptist Church and other groups, she said.

Wilson said she hopes the exhibition will encourage others to quilt.

"It's my desire that women will see how wonderful this craft is and embrace what, at one point, seemed to be lost," she said. "It's a good thing to be able to come together and bond with other women just for the sake of quilting."

