

THE TEXAS ROOM DISPATCH

A Publication of the Friends of the Texas Room
Volume No. 2, No. 2, April 2004

SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, April 17, 2004 * 10 a.m.-Noon
Museum of Printing History
1324 West Clay

The Museum of Printing History is located on West Clay Street between Waugh Drive and Montrose, one block south of West Dallas.

Free parking is available in the lot across the street or in the small lot on the left, adjacent to the Museum building.

Our speaker will be FTR Board Member Marvin Rich. He will talk about the Texas Library System. He is profiled below under the Board Profile.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: UPCOMING FTR MEETINGS

Meetings are set for different days and times throughout the year to make it convenient for as many people as possible to attend at least one meeting.

Tuesday, July 20, 2004, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., Museum of Printing History.

Saturday, October 23, 2004, 10 a.m.-Noon, Museum of Printing History.

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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear Friends:

April 29 marks the first anniversary of the meeting at which the Friends of the Texas Room adopted By-laws and elected its first board of directors. Our speaker at that meeting was Dr. Don Carlton, Director of the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin and the founding director of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center. In his talk, Dr. Carlton traced the history of the HMRC, which was founded to bring together in one place the records relating to all aspects of the history of the Houston metropolitan area. The purpose of this was to enable scholars to study and analyze all parts of our community in the context of the whole. A major objective of the Friends of the Texas Room is to support the continuation and expansion of this original purpose.

Over the past year, our meetings have featured local researchers who have used the resources of the HMRC, the Texas and Local History Collection, and the Special Collections to write books and articles and to restore historic buildings. Our most recent speaker, Barry Moore, Project Architect for the renovation of the Willow Street Pump Station, is the son of the late architect, Harvin Moore, whose architectural drawings form part of the architectural archive at the HMRC. FTR board member, Jim Glass, spoke last October about his much-anticipated, upcoming book on Houston during its first year, 1837. At our July meeting, Will Howard, Assistant Manager of the Texas Room, organized a superb display of little-known treasures, which are among the holdings in the Texas and Local History Collection and the Special Collections.

On August 26, 2003, FTR Secretary, Betty Chapman, joined me in appearing before City Council to speak against any proposal to separate all or part of the African American Archives from the HMRC and move them to the Edgar M. Gregory School. We believe such an action would be contrary to the original purpose of the HMRC and very counter-productive. I wrote a letter to this effect to Mayor Brown and City Council.

On February 19, 2004, most of the FTR board met with Mayor White's Deputy Chief of Staff, Terence Fontaine, to reiterate our concerns about the possible separation of all or part of the African American Archives from the HMRC. We also expressed our opposition to the plan to build a "state of the art" photography laboratory at the Gregory School to replace the existing photography laboratory in the Ideson Building. Everyone agrees that the existing laboratory needs to be replaced. However, those of us who have used it feel strongly that the new laboratory needs to be in the same building with the historical materials that are being copied. The added expense and the danger to which the archival materials would be subjected in the process of transporting them to and from the Gregory School is unacceptable.

I represent the FTR on a committee that has been formed to plan for the renovation of the Julia Ideson Building. This committee has met once, on January 28, 2004. A major impetus for renovating the Ideson Building is a plan to make as much of it as possible available for receptions, meetings and conferences. Revenues from renting portions of the building out for private functions would be used to make up for cuts in the library's portion of the city budget.

The board of the FTR directed me to ask the renovation committee to hire a professional archivist from the outside to analyze the needs of the HMRC, the Texas and Local History Collections and the Special Collections before moving forward with the planning process. The committee agreed to this and asked me to find such an outside archivist. I submitted a name to the committee in late February, and it is my understanding that the outside archivist will begin working on the assessment in June. Our board feels strongly that the needs of the historical collections and the researchers who use them must take priority in any renovation of the Ideson Building.

We have a number of faithful volunteers in the Texas Room and the HMRC. The library staff is extremely complimentary of their work and find them invaluable. If you or anyone you know has time to spare on a regular basis and would like to have the satisfaction of making a difference in our community, please consider being one of our volunteers.

Most of our members have joined because they learned about us by word of mouth. Please pass on the membership form and encourage your friends and colleagues to join.

Dorothy Knox Houghton

MINUTES, FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM, JANUARY 21, 2004

Friends of the Texas Room met January 21, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 W. Clay. President Dorothy Knox Houghton called the meeting to order and thanked the Museum of Printing History for providing us with a permanent meeting place. She introduced Barry Moore, architect for the renovation of the Willow Street Pump Station, who presented a program on the historic site. In conclusion, he noted that Anna Mod has prepared the application for listing the building on the National Register of Historic Places.

Barbara Gubbin, Director of the Houston Public Library, reported on events at the library. She invited everyone to attend the Centennial Kick-off Party, which is to be held on January 24 from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. It will include a dedication ceremony for the Historic Texas marker for the Julia Ideson Building. The Share-a-Memory program was explained and the contribution of an Acres Homes' Branch patron was read. Ms. Gubbin announced that one could stay informed about centennial events throughout the year by logging onto Houstonlibrary.org. She also reported that she had centennial T-shirts for the Friends Board members and had others available to sell to anyone interested in having one. Ms. Gubbin reported on the renovation of the Jesse Jones Building. It will cost \$11 million and is to include replacing the escalators with stairs, adding the infrastructure needed for today's technology, adding a cafeteria, enlarging the children's room, adding a teen department, bringing the building into compliance with ADA requirements, and re-doing the plaza area. Exterior work on the building has already been completed. The entire project will require two years, but the building will remain open during renovation.

The renovation of the Julia Ideson Building was then discussed. Exterior work on the building has

been completed. The remaining work will cost approximately \$10 million, but only a small portion of that amount is presently available. A committee has been formed to work on long-range plans to determine the best use of space. Dorothy Knox Houghton will represent the Friends on this committee. The group expressed concerns as to the needs of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center being the top priority in determining how the building will be renovated. The possibility of African-American archives being moved to the proposed Gregory School facility and the relocation of HMRC's photo lab to that building were also discussed. Members of the group expressed their opposition to both of these plans.

In the business session that followed, the president thanked Sandra Lord and Dorothy Johnson for preparing and mailing the newsletter. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter. A treasurer's report indicated that we currently have \$5,000 in our account. Members were asked to submit names of potential members, who will be sent a letter asking them to join. The president announced that a luncheon will be held on April 1 to raise money to purchase materials for the library. The volunteers who were present were recognized and an appeal was made for others to join them in working in the Texas Room, where there are a number of volunteer opportunities available. Dorothy Johnson requested e-mail addresses and reminded members that renewals are due in January. She also announced that corporations will give matching funds to employees or retirees who are involved with a non-profit organization and she urged any who qualified to pursue this to raise funds for the Friends.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday morning, April 17 at the Museum of Printing History. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty T. Chapman, Secretary

BOARD PROFILE: MARVIN RICH

Marvin Rich is a second-generation native Houstonian who is married to native Houstonian Shirley Mayer Rich. They have three children: Bernard, a single father with two daughters, who lives in Houston; Elka Poor, her REAL married name, who lives in Raanana, Israel with her husband David and their three Houston-born children, two sons and a daughter; and Kenneth, who is not married and lives in the Heights.

Marvin and Shirley both attended San Jacinto High School, which has the largest alumni association in the U. S. Marvin first acquired his interest in libraries when he went to the Norma Meldrum Room as a child. Later, he was a library assistant at Allen Academy in Bryan.

Marvin attended The University of Texas, majoring in marketing until he was drafted. He served in the U. S. Army as a publications specialist.

Returning to Houston, Marvin joined his family business, Phil Rich Fan Mfg. Co. He was vice president of sales, in charge of institutional sales to schools that were not air-conditioned at that time. When the company was sold to a national appliance manufacturing company, Marvin used

his expertise with school sales to become an educational sales representative with Grolier Publishing. He traveled throughout south and east Texas, calling on every public and private school and all of the libraries in the South Texas, Central Texas, Alamo, and Houston area library systems. He also became active in the Texas Library Association and participated in Legislative Lobby Days at the Texas Legislature, learning about the state funding problems of public and school libraries.

After Grolier was sold to a French publisher, Hachette, Marvin represented two other library sales company. In 1994, Governor Ann Richards appointed Marvin to serve six years on the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, where he use his experience in the field to try to improve the State Library system. After his term expired, Marvin remained active in TLA, continuing to participate on the Legislative Committee.

Marvin's other interests include serving as Democratic Precinct Chair in Meyerland and serving as Chair of the Resolutions Committee at conventions. He also has served on the Texas Party Platform Committee. He is a National Commissioner of the Anti-Defamation League and on the Southwest Regional Board and executive committee, and serves on the Jewish Federation Community Relations Committee and the Houston Police Advisory Committee. Marvin has been a long-time member of Texas Jewish Historical Society and has been nominated to serve as President at the Annual Gathering, which will take place in San Antonio in April 2004.

UPCOMING CENTENNIAL EVENT

During 2004, the Houston Public Library celebrates its century of service to Houston with a yearlong celebration: "Empowering Houstonians for 100 Years: 1904-2004." On **Sunday, May 2**, there will be a Staff Reunion Party, featuring the debut of Betty Chapman's book 100 Years-100 Stories. The public is invited. For more information, log on to the Library's website: www.houstonlibrary.org.

DUES REMINDER

Our Membership Year runs from January 1 - December 31. Please fill in the membership form at the end of this Newsletter and mail it with your check to P. O. Box 27827, Houston, TX 77227-7827. Please make your check payable to "Friends of the Texas Room." If you have friends who might be interested in membership, please submit their names and addresses along with your check and we will send them information. If you have email, please include it. This saves us mailing costs.

CULTURAL MATCHING GIFTS

Are you or your spouse working for or retired from a corporation which makes cultural matching grants or volunteer involvement awards if you give to or do volunteer work for a cultural institution?

Will your employer match your gifts to cultural institutions that qualify under IRS 501(c)(3) of the

Internal Revenue Service Code?

The Friends of the Texas Room has such a qualification. Send your corporation's cultural matching funds form with your check for membership in FTR. If you volunteer your time as an officer of FTR or in the Texas Room or HMRC, keep track of your hours and turn them in to your corporation so that the FTR may obtain a grant from your corporation's program. This is "found money" for FTR and can be used towards making a difference to the Texas Room and HMRC.

FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM: WHO WE ARE

Mission. The Friends of the Texas Room seeks to support the collections of the Texas and Local History Department, the Archives and Manuscripts Department, and the Special Collections Department of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library.

Board of Directors:

President - Dorothy Knox Houghton

Vice-President - George Werner

Secretary - Betty Chapman

Treasurer - Marks Hinton

Board members-at-large: Jim Glass, Marvin Rich, Anne Sloan, Elizabeth Whitlow

HOW TO CONTACT THE FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM

Membership applications, dues, donations, and mail for Board Members should be sent to the address below:

Friends of the Texas Room
P. O. Box 27827
Houston, Texas 77227-7827

HOW TO CONTACT THE TEXAS ROOM DISPATCH

Submissions and comments for the Texas Room Dispatch should be sent to the Texas Room Dispatch Editor at the address below.

Sandra Lord
Texas Room Dispatch Editor
P. O. Box 230183
Houston, Texas 77223-0183
(713) 222-9255 * Fax: (713) 921-1510
Email: SandraSLord@aol.com

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM

Please spread the word and help us find new members. If you have access to a list of likely members which you can share with us, we would appreciate it. The Membership Application below can be emailed to your prospects or photocopied and faxed or mailed to prospective members.

breaking news.

Hospitality: Meeting room preparations, greeting people, refreshments when needed, etc.

Programs: Help develop programs or special seminars or workshops.

Public Relations: Developing posters, displays, news releases, handouts, etc.

Special Projects

Other: _____
