

THE TEXAS ROOM DISPATCH

A Publication of the Friends of the Texas Room
Volume No. 2, No. 1, January 2004

WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, January 21, 2004 * 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
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 Member Barry Moore. He will bring us up to date on his work as Project Architect for the restoration and renovation of the Willow Street Pump Station.

Barry Moore is a native Houstonian. He is the son of prominent Houston architect, Harvin Moore, who was one of the founders of the Harris County Heritage Society in 1954, and whose papers are deposited in the Architectural Archives at the HMRC.

Moore received a B.A. in History at Rice University, a B. A. in Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Master's degree in Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley.

He is a Senior Associate at Gensler Architects. For seventeen years, he has been an Adjunct Professor at the University of Houston School of Architecture, where he founded the Workshop for Historic Architecture (preservation studies).

Moore was Project Architect for the restoration and renovation of the Willow Street Pump Station, which is located on North San Jacinto Street.

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.

Wednesday, January 21, 2004, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., Museum of Printing History.
Saturday, April 17, 2004, 10 a.m.-Noon, Museum of Printing History.
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:

Those of us who attended the Friends' October meeting were treated to a wonderful talk by long-time Texas Room researcher and Friends of the Texas Room board member, Jim Glass. The focus of Jim's research has been Houston's first year, 1837, and the events that led up to it. He is completing a book and a bird's-eye view historical map showing Houston in December 1837. The map will show the buildings that were here at that time and the large gully parallel to Main Street which now runs under Caroline Street.

In 1986, for the sesquicentennial of both the Republic of Texas and the City of Houston, Jim published a marine map for the year 1836 showing the waterways and settlements from the foot of Main Street in Houston to the bar in Galveston Bay where the bay joins the Gulf. His new map will complement the earlier one. Together they will provide an invaluable picture of the Houston/Galveston area at the time when Houston was founded.

In his talk, Jim discussed several of the original records he used in his research. From the 1824 Stephen F. Austin map based on the original survey by William Cooke, one can see where Houston was first laid out in relation to the rest of the Austin grant. In the microfilm records of passenger ships traveling between Texas and New Orleans, which Jim found at Clayton Library, he was able to piece together a chart of traffic to each Texas port. A valuable ship log kept by Gail Borden, who was the customs agent in Galveston, was discovered underneath a newspaper that had been glued on top of it, revealing more information for Jim's chart. Similar sources enabled Jim to extrapolate the fact that, in the late 1820s, John R. Harris' ships exported several hundred thousand dollars worth of cotton (in today's dollars) from Texas plantations, in particular those of Jared Groce.

The purpose of the Friends of the Texas Room is to ensure the preservation and accessibility of the original historical records of our area so that Jim and scholars who follow him will continue to be able to interpret our history. To that end, I will be representing the Friends of the Texas Room on the Julia Ideson Building Committee in its deliberations about the proposed renovation of the Julia Ideson Building. The committee's first meeting will be on January 28, 2004. I will keep the membership informed about the plans as they unfold.

Dorothy Knox Houghton

MINUTES, FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM, OCTOBER 25, 2003

Friends of the Texas Room met October 25, 2003, at 10:00 a.m. in the Harriet Dickson Reynolds Room of the Houston Public Library's Julia Ideson Building with 26 persons present. President Dorothy Knox Houghton called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. The July minutes were approved as printed in the Newsletter. In the absence of Treasurer Marks Hinton, the president reported that we currently have 129 members and that our bank balance is \$3,899.01.

Mrs. Houghton announced that we have received our non-profit status from the Internal Revenue Service. She expressed appreciation to Trevia Wooster Beverly for having prepared the Newsletter during the past year and announced that Sandra Lord is now chairing the Newsletter Committee. Dorothy Johnson will continue as Membership Chairman. Members were encouraged to invite others to join the Friends. It was noted that anyone joining now will have their dues waived for the remainder of this calendar year. Dues for 2004 will be collected from the entire membership in January. A membership brochure is being prepared for use in recruiting members. The president announced these dates for 2004 meetings: Wednesday evening, January 21; Saturday morning, April 17; Tuesday evening, July 20; and Saturday morning, October 23. Meeting places will be announced later.

Jim Glass presented the program on his extensive research of Houston in 1836-37, much of which was conducted in the Texas Room. He stated that he is in the process of completing a manuscript, which he plans to have published.

Following the program, several Houston Public Library staff members addressed the group. Carol Johnson, who is chairing the renovation of the Jesse Jones Building, discussed how this project will affect the Julia Ideson Building. During the two-year renovation, there will be some space adjustments in JIB, but these are not expected to have any permanent effect on the present use of the building.

Will Howard, supervisor of the Texas and Local History Department, reported that there are presently four regular volunteers in the Texas Room. These volunteers are working on the vertical files, installing exhibits, organizing railroad materials, devising a database for maps in the collections, and compiling Texas prison records. Mr. Howard stated that more volunteers would be welcomed.

Betty Chapman announced that volunteers are needed for two aspects of the library's Centennial observance: helping locate photographs of those persons for whom branch libraries are named and assisting with the exhibits to be installed in the Julia Ideson Building during the year. A calendar of planned Centennial events was distributed.

Archivist Andy Hempe reported that four volunteers, who have been trained to process archival collections, are currently processing the papers of former City Councilman Jim Westmoreland. He added that additional volunteers could be trained, but that work space is very limited just now.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m., after which Mr. Hempe conducted a tour of some of the storage areas in the building.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty T. Chapman, Secretary

BOARD PROFILE: BETTY TRAPP CHAPMAN

Betty Trapp Chapman is a native of Tupelo, Mississippi, and a graduate of Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. A resident of Houston for more than forty years, she has an abiding interest in the city's history and continuing development. Asked how she became so interested in Houston's local history, Betty responded that, "It all began in 1975 when I became a docent for the Heritage Society. I immediately realized that I had found my 'life's calling.' As I began doing research for the Heritage Society on various subjects, I developed a real passion for both research and Houston's history."

Her widely-read column, "Houston Heritage," appears weekly in the Houston Business Journal; and her published works include *Historic Houston-An Illustrated History and Resource Guide*; *2-Minute Histories of Houston*, a compilation of "Houston Heritage" articles; *Houston Then and Now*, a supplemental text used in the area's elementary schools; and "From the Parlor to the Public: New Roles for Women in Houston, 1885-1918," which appeared in *The Houston Review*. *Houston Women: Invisible Threads in the Tapestry* was published in October 2000. Debuting on Sunday, May 2, is Betty's *100 Years-100 Stories*, a photographic history with 100 images covering the Houston Public Library System's first century.

While women's history continues to be Betty's primary interest, over the years, she has been a lecturer for Rice University's School of Continuing Studies and has served as a consultant for various historical projects in the community. One of her most interesting projects has been the Texas Avenue markers. Currently, 20 markers grace specially-designed light posts along Texas Avenue, with 38 more to come. In researching the subjects and texts for the markers, Betty made heavy use of the collections at the HMRC, "from City Directories and maps, to determine what was originally on each block, to the photographic collections to document that finding."

Betty has served on the boards of the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, The Heritage Society, Houston Junior Forum, and Friends of Women's Studies, University of Houston.

When asked why she was a leading force behind the organization of the Friends of the Texas Room, Betty replied, "One reason is that I value so highly the historical collections at HMRC and became quite concerned, not only about preserving their existence and integrity, but also about educating the public about the treasures that are there."

Betty's passion for researching and preserving Houston's history can be summed up by the following story: "At a Christmas party during the holidays," Betty said, "everyone was given a question to answer about themselves. Mine was, 'What activity do you enjoy the most?' After thinking long and hard -- and this came as a surprise even to me -- I replied, 'Reading and researching. It is like being on a constant treasure hunt because you never know what you will discover!' A close runner-up in my 'favorite things to do' is roaming in the nooks and crannies of our city to learn about what has gone before. All of this leads to the commitment I have to share with others through my writing, speaking, and teaching. I want every Houstonian to know their city's history and to grow in their appreciation of that history."

HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

The Houston Public Library first opened as the Carnegie Library on March 2, 1904, on the corner of McKinney and Travis. During the past 100 years, the Library has expanded from just one building to a library system that includes the Central Library, 35 branches, and one cooperative facility serving a metropolitan population of more than four million.

During 2004, the Houston Public Library celebrates this century of service to Houston with a yearlong celebration: "Empowering Houstonians for 100 Years: 1904-2004."

Upcoming events include:

Saturday, January 24, Noon-4 pm: One Hundred and One Big Party. Julia Ideson Building. 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: Dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the Julia Ideson Building, named for the City's first librarian; 12:30 pm - 4:00 pm.: Centennial exhibit and historical films about the Ideson Building and the Houston Public Library System, storytelling, face painting, crafts, games, tours, and entertainment.

February: Black History Month. As early as 1907, the Colored Carnegie Library operated inside Houston's Colored High School in Freedmens Town.

Thursday, March 4, 5 pm-7 pm: Library Founders Reception honoring the Ladies Reading Club, The Women's Club, and others important to the growth and development of the Library. March is Women's History Month.

Thursday, April 1: Houston Public Library Centennial Luncheon, River Oaks Country Club. Speaker: Linda Ellerbee. Purpose: To raise money for the book fund of the Library. All money raised at the luncheon will be dedicated to the book fund. Individual Seats: Patron - \$500; Benefactor - \$1,000; Underwriter - \$2,000. Tables for Ten: Patron - \$5,000; Benefactor - \$10,000; Underwriter - \$20,000. Please make your checks payable to the Houston Public Library Book Fund and mail them to Lillie Robertson at 2220 Fairview, Houston, Texas 77019.

Sunday, May 2: Staff Reunion Party featuring the debut of Betty Chapman's book 100 Years-100 Stories. The public is invited.

Centennial Closing Ceremony, date to be announced: Dedication of a historical subject marker honoring the Houston Public Library System.

The Library also invites everyone to participate in the "Share Your Memories Campaign." Submit your memories - funny stories, anecdotes, and other memorable events going back as far as 1904 to as recently as yesterday - through forms available at each branch or through the Library's website: www.houstonlibrary.org.

FTR VOLUNTEER UPDATE

The Vertical Files. Since the summer of 2003, Kathy Boran and Gayle McDonald, both members of the Friends of the Texas Room, have spent two afternoons a month working on the Vertical Files in The Texas Room. The Vertical Files consist of the articles and newspaper clippings found inside file cabinets in the area near the photocopy machines. They need constant maintenance and updating. Kathy and Gayle report that, while the job is not difficult, it is challenging. "We have been made to feel welcome and needed and have the added perk of being able to stop and read anything we find of particular interest." They were trained by Texas Room staff and a staff member is always present to answer their questions.

You, too, can be a Texas Room Volunteer! The Texas Room offers many opportunities for volunteers who can spare a few hours now and then. You may schedule your own hours and there is no need to find a substitute if you have a conflict.

Please consider offering your help to other lovers of Texas history. To become a Texas Room Volunteer, please contact Anne Sloan at (713) 655-1219.

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.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report that Linda Draut, wife of Joel Draut, the photographer for the HMRC, passed away on Monday, January 12, 2004. A heavily attended celebration of Linda's life was held on Sunday, January 17, 2004, at the Scottish Rite Arabian Shrine Temple. Donations "In Memory of Linda Draut" may be made to the Texas Heart Institute, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, or to the Foundation for Cardiac Research.

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.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: (Membership plus contribution) \$_____

NOTE: Friends of the Texas Room is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization operating under IRS Code 501(c)(3). Membership and additional contributions over and above membership are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Is your gift eligible as a "matching gift" from an employer or other entity? If so, please give the name: _____

Volunteer Interests:

Please circle items below if you would like to volunteer for FTR activities or library services:

Collections Volunteer: Be trained and increase your own knowledge about research activities.

Newsletter: Writing articles about materials in the collections or reporting on related activities.

Website manager: Design and maintain an official site for the Friends of the Texas Room.

Membership: Maintain up-to-date membership list and send out renewal notices.

Telephone/E-Mail Committee: Contact for meeting cancellations, unscheduled events, or 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:
