

THE TEXAS ROOM DISPATCH

A Publication of the Friends of the Texas Room
Volume No.3, No. 4, October 2005

FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, October 15, 2005 * 10 a.m.-Noon
Harris County Archives
Harris County Criminal Justice Center, 1201 Franklin, 12th Floor

Parking: Please remember that there is no free parking downtown at meters on Saturdays until 6 p.m.

Our speaker will be Sarah Jackson, Harris County Archivist. She will introduce us to the Harris County Archives

UPCOMING FTR MEETINGS

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

Saturday, October 15, 2005, 10 a.m.-Noon, Harris County Archives, Harris County Criminal Justice Center, 1201 Franklin, 12th Floor.

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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear Friends:

One of the original goals of the group that founded the Friends of the Texas Room was to educate the public at large about the scope and depth of the archival collections at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center. We quickly realized that most people do not understand the difference between a library and an archive. Our first task, therefore, was to explain that difference. A library is a place to do reference work and to check out books to take home. An archive is where original, historic, one-of-a-kind materials (maps, documents, letters, photographs, early newspapers, rare books, etc.) are held for the purpose of preservation and research. Archives require special temperature and humidity controls, special security, and shelving and cabinetry for storage that are different from those required for a library.

Recently one of our members, Mr. James R. Bailey, owner of Sunset Productions, offered to produce a comprehensive video documentary on the extensive holdings of the HMRC. Mr. Bailey produced the documentary, "The Golden Age of Texas Courthouses," which aired recently on Channel 8. He also produced an upcoming program on Channel 8 entitled "Brushstrokes of South Texas" about a series of murals in the Kenedy Ranch Museum by artist Daniel Lechon depicting the history of South Texas. Mr. Bailey and FTxR board member, Nancy Burch, who frequently collaborates with Mr. Bailey on productions, have offered to produce our video at cost, donating their own time. They propose to produce a video of 28-30 minutes in length of the highest caliber worthy of being shown on public television.

The plan is to have an eight-to-ten minute introductory segment that can be excerpted to stand alone. This segment will be a general overview of the scope of the collections and will cover topics such as the newspapers going back to the 1830s, the city directories going back to the first one published in 1866, the criss-cross directories, and other tools which are used by most HMRC patrons at one time or another. Taken together, these sources alone could be used to trace the history of Houston from its earliest days during the Republic of Texas.

The rest of the video will consist of a series of segments, each lasting several minutes, focusing on areas of special strength and concentration such as architecture, maps, rare books, and photographs. Like the introductory segment, these segments could be excerpted and used as stand-alone pieces. We see many uses both for the video as a whole and for the stand-alone segments. We anticipate that one of the first uses can be as an aid in raising the money to renovate the Ideson Building and build the new wing for the HMRC.

The Library Administration has agreed to contribute \$8,000 toward the \$20,000 total cost. For fund-raising purposes, we plan to divide the remaining \$12,000 into segments of approximately \$3,000 each (corresponding to the individual segments listed above). We welcome any and all ideas about individuals, corporations or foundations that might be interested in funding one of these

segments.

The Board has voted to spend \$1,300 of its share of the budget for the video, which will be matched by \$1,300 from the Library's share, to fund the photographing of the archival materials selected to be featured in the documentary. The photographing must be done this fall, because the rooms where the photographing will take place will become office space in January. (Staff members from the Jones Building will move temporarily into the Ideson Building while the Jones Building is being renovated.) The film will be stored until we have raised the \$12,000. We are in the process of identifying potential sources of funding and expect to begin making contacts within the next few weeks.

We will keep you posted on the progress of this exciting project.

Dorothy Knox Houghton

**MINUTES
FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM
JULY 18, 2005**

Friends of the Texas Room met Monday, July 18, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 W. Clay. President Dorothy Knox Houghton called the meeting to order, after which the minutes of the April 23 meeting were approved as printed in The Texas Room Dispatch. Treasurer George Werner reported that we currently have a balance of \$18,460.24; this figure does not reflect a contribution of \$500 from ExxonMobil that was received in the mail that day.

Brenda Tirrell, manager of Central Library, addressed several issues that had been posed to the Houston Public Library staff by our board. She explained that the amount of \$865,000 reported in a recent newspaper article as being available for the renovation of the Julia Ideson Building was actually the unspent funds from the original \$1 million appropriated for this renovation by the previous city administration. This money will be used for Phase 1 of the JIB renovation which will include converting first floor space (the Auditorium, Norma Meldrum Room, and Harriet Dickson Reynolds Room) to meeting rooms, creating a new entrance and restrooms for the realigned Auditorium space, and meeting ADA standards for the existing restrooms and elevator. This will enable JIB to be used as a support facility for central services when the Jesse Jones Building closes for renovation later this year. Hopefully, funding will be available for the remaining work on JIB when the Jones Building reopens in 2 to 2 ½ years. Ms. Tirrell reported that the retrospective conversion of the HMRC map collections, which Friends of the Texas Room agreed to fund, should be completed by mid-September. She then introduced Steven Strom, who has returned to the

Houston Public Library as manager of the HMRC. Mr. Strom introduced the following new staff members: Ron Dreese, Archivist I; Tammy Jordan, Archivist II; and Kandra Leonard, Supervisor of Support Services. Mr. Strom also announced that the HMRC will stage an exhibit in the fall on the 400th anniversary of the publication of Don Quixote.

President Houghton announced that our membership brochures are now available to be used in recruiting new members. She also announced that a Membership Mixer will be held on September 26 from 7:00-9:00 at Story Sloane's Gallery on Fondren. Members were encouraged to invite prospective members to the event. Mr. Sloane has offered to give photographic posters to anyone who joins that evening.

The president introduced Paul Homeyer, who presented an enlightening talk on "Unmasking Main Street," which revealed in photographs the many buildings downtown that had been slip-covered over the years.

Following the program, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty T. Chapman, Secretary

CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY

**Friends of the Texas Room Policy for Contributions to
the Houston Metropolitan Research Center,
that includes the collections of the
Archives and Manuscripts Department,
the Texas and Local History Department,
and the Special Collections Department
of the Houston Public Library**

From time to time, the Friends of the Texas Room will purchase and contribute to the Houston Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library items that will enrich and enhance the above named collections and ensure their preservation.

All such contributions will be purchased by the Friends directly and then given to the Library with specific stipulations as to how such contributions are to be used by the Library to enhance and ensure the preservation of the HMRC collections.

The Friends will give no money directly to the Library.

The Friends will not buy expendable supplies for the Library.

The Friends will not fund Library personnel.

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.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Fall 2005 – HMRC exhibit celebrating the 400th anniversary of the publication of Don Quixote.

April 2006 – Texas Library Association's Annual Meeting, Houston.

WHAT OUR FRIENDS ARE DOING

Projects & Publications Using HMRC Resources.

Friends member Barry Moore, Chair of the Rice Design Alliance CITE Magazine Editorial Review Board, writes a column in that quarterly publication titled "Endangered City." For the Fall 2005 issue of CITE, which will feature a retail design theme, he researched Westbury Square in the Texas Room and the Architectural Archives.

Please continue to contact Sandra Lord, editor of the Texas Room Dispatch (sandraslord@aol.com), with information about your volunteer service at the HMRC and about projects you are working on that utilize the resources of the HMRC.

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.

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 – Barrie Scardino

Secretary - Betty Chapman

Treasurer – George Werner

Parliamentarian – Nancy T. Burch

Directors: Paul Homeyer, Sims McCutcheon, Anne H. Sloan, Carol Weaver

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

Membership in the Friends of the Texas Room has reached 190! Please spread

the word and help us find even more 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.

FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS ROOM

Membership Application: Membership Year: January 1 - December 31

RETURN TO: P.O. BOX 27827, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77227-7827