A Look Back: Events & Happenings

Over 75 people attended the unveiling of the official Texas Historical markers commemorating the Carroll Library building and The Texas Collection.

The cookbook exhibit kick-off lecture at The Texas Collection at the Carroll Library was a huge success as over 150 people attended the presentation on Monday, March 2. (Please see complete story on page 2.)

Left: Jeff Guinn, author of Go Down Together, visits with students during the “Glorious and Story Come Down Together” book-signing held at The Texas Collection. The event was sponsored by the Baylor Journalism Department and The Texas Collection and featured Guinn along with other Texas authors Jim Donovan, Mary Rogers and Carlton Stowers.

Right: Attendees were able to purchase books from all four authors at the book-signing.

Pro Texana Society: An Annual Fund To Help Support the Texas Collection

Since 1923, The Texas Collection has been synonymous with collecting, preserving and providing access to anyone interested in learning about the state of Texas, from history and literature to geology and genealogy. The Texas Collection is a unique research library established by two major gifts of 1,000 books donated by Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hazen Aynesworth of Waco, Texas. The original gift has grown to over 125,000 books, numerous newspapers and journals, rich personal archives and the official Baylor University archives.

We would like you to join us in becoming a charter member of the newly formed Pro Texana Society. This annual excellence fund will support the library in all areas, such as funds for purchasing new or rare materials, expanding electronic resources, digitizing materials, hiring students or staff and making improvements to the facility. Please join today at the beginning level of $50, or at the $100 level, $500 level, $1,000 level or higher. This wonderful collection was built by the generous gifts of people like you, and, with your support, we can continue our mission of promoting and preserving The Texas Collection.

If you are interested in becoming a Pro Texana Society member, indicate “Pro Texana Society” on the note line of your check made payable to Baylor University and mail to: John Wilson, The Texas Collection, One Bear Place #97142, Waco, Texas, 76798-7142.

If you have questions about the new Pro Texana Society, I invite you to contact me at 254.710.3457 or John_Wilson@baylor.edu.

- John S. Wilson
Associate Director

See What’s Cooking in The Texas Collection

The Texas Collection has been collecting cookbooks for years but recently has increased its efforts. With over 1,300 titles representing Texas’ regions, places of worship, cultures, schools, organizations and families, our collection is one of the largest in the world.

Containing more than recipes, cookbooks may be used as research materials because they often contain a plethora of information. Some have history sections, either brief or in-depth, that include everything from member rosters to photographs to contributor biographies, all of which provide insight into Texas society and culture.

Older cookbooks often include advertisements from local businesses. These ads help historians understand an area’s economy by providing an indication of the types of goods and services available, from coffin makers to seamstresses.

Cultural cookbooks provide insight into the people of Texas. Many describe the types of foods, as well as their meaning, used during festivals and holidays. From these cookbooks, researchers can see the evolution of Texas cuisine as well as the types of cultural groups prevalent in an area of Texas.

Because many do not see the value of placing them in a library, family cookbooks are the rarest type we collect. A goldmine for genealogists, they often contain photographs, remembrances and biographies. Typically, we rely on donations as many families publish only a small quantity, usually for family members.

Many of these cookbooks are on display at The Texas Collection through May 31, 2009, as part of our “Dash of Recipes, Pinch of History” exhibition. If you are interested in donating your Texas cookbooks, contact us by phone at 254.710.1268 or email txcoll@baylor.edu.
Greetings! Much has occurred in this special collections library and archival research center since our last newsletter. We are interested in resumes contacting our Texas Collection friends, scholars, patrons and all who care about the study of Texas, and we hope you will offer comments and other forms of feedback to this newsletter. We invite you to make your own outlet about the world of Texana.

Have you heard? Baylor's back in the village of Independence, Texas, the university's 1845 birthplace and home for 43 years. There, during the 1840s, from Baylor—from the Republic of Texas, the first decades of statehood, through the Civil War and after 1866—many rich experiences in the life of our venerable institution unfolded.

The Texas Collection has continued that work in a series of preservation projects in the village of Independence, gained, and in Butler-Moore Mill Hill, in particular. With the energetic assistance of alumnus Lanella Spinks Gray and others in Independence, we have made steady progress to the point that hugeauds of Baylors are signing up for the daylong tours of historic Independence and Washington County. Stay tuned for more about the "new" work in our beautiful hometown.

Future newsletters will provide overviews and other activities related to The Texas Collection. Readers will find interesting news about our state historical markets, public lecture and exhibits, newly acquired collections, restored paintings, professional meetings attended, a new map room, endowment support from donors and other topics too numerous to list. Please watch your mail for newsletters about our work. Also, be sure to visit our revised web site: www.baylor.edu/lis/texas. You'll be glad you did.

- Thomas L. Charlton

**Cookbook Lecture Draws Huge Crowd**

On Monday, March 2 (Texas Independence Day), Dr. Rebecca Sharpless, assistant professor of history at Texas Christian University, spoke on "Women's Kitchens, Texas Women's Worlds: Cookbooks as Historical Documents" to a crowd of more than 50 individuals gathered in the reading room of The Texas Collection. Dr. Sharpless said she knew that after completing Fertile Ground, Narrating Choices: Women as Users of Texas Cookbooks, 1880-1949 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999) that she wanted to do something about food and found that "in every state of the old Confederacy, women began publishing cookbooks—one source of women's writing."

Focusing on three cookbooks published by members of the Guild of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Waco, Sharpless pointed out the kinds of information included in cookbooks. For example, in the cookbook published in 1888, the women pledged to raise $800 toward the liquidation of the church debt so we know that "St. Paul's was in debt [and] that the women of the church thought it was their responsibility to help fix the problem."

This first cookbook was titled Household Manual and Practical Cook Book and included many dishes on proper housekeeping. "Honoring and raising up women's roles and rights as important to society" was clearly a strong part of late 19th Century Cook Book. This publication was financed by ads and conjures up "interesting images of proper ladies going around soliciting funds," crossing the lines of commerce.

Fifty-eight years later before the third Guild cookbook, Out of This World Recipes, was published in 1949. It showed that the women of St. Paul's were moving forward after the Great Depression and World War II. The foreword stated "We have endeavored to meet the needs of simple cookery, and to lift the everyday cookout of the commonplace."

It included nostalgic and regional recipes such as Mississippi smoked hound dog, chicken, potted sweet potatoes spoon bread, Grandma's pound cake, and Woodford County Kentucky Summer Ice Cake. Other recipes featured lots of cream cheese, Velvereta, and a liberal use of gelatin and jello.

Sharpless concluded that the cookbooks published by the women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church showed that they were "creatures of their times: the Progressive impulse, the postwar turn toward domesticity, the attitudes toward the South and their attitudes toward race and "to sell us a lot about women across a sixty-year span."

The 2009 Heart of Texas Regional History Fair was held February 12-13, 2009, on the Baylor University campus. Over 375 students, representing schools in Bell, Coryell, Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Limestone, McLennan, Mills, Navarro and Robertson counties, participated in this year's fair. The students registered 225 projects in eight categories: themes, models, performances, websites and historical papers. This year's theme was "individuals in History: Actions and Legacies." The Blodgetts uncovered more than historical archives and other archival materials relevant to his and Dorothy's work. The books were added to the library's holdings, and the notes and manuscripts accessioned in the archives. He has committed to placing both his and Dorothy's personal and professional files here after he checks their content.

We understand that these gifts are nothing short of a treasure, as Dorothy was a news journalist, teacher and public relations consultant, and wrote, with former Governor and Mrs. Price Daniel, The Texas Governor's Mansion, the definitive history of the Mansion. Terrell, the Mike Hogg Professor Emeritus at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin, has also had careers in city government management and management consulting.

This is the earliest existing correspondence of Hernando Cortés. Cortés was the Spanish conquistador, who was peacefully received by the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma at Tenochtitlan on November 8, 1519. After taking Moctezuma hostage, Cortés began taking control of the city. His second letter is dated before the enmity between the Aztec and Spanish had evolved to a bloody conflict with Moctezuma being killed by his own people. After Moctezuma's death, Cortés was forced to flee Tenochtitlan, but he returned with reinforcements and laid siege to the city. Cortés razed the Aztec capital and built Mexico City on its ruins. It quickly became the European center of the New World.

Cortés' Second Letter was first printed in Spanish at Sevilla in 1522. It was translated into Latin for this edition in 1524. This particular edition marks the first appearance of the map of the city of Mexico. The map accompanied this letter, but was not engraved in time for the Spanish edition. An English translation of this letter can be found online at Modern History Sourcebook. (www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/цовторизовок.html).

The Texas Collection's copy of Cortés' Second Letter was purchased through the benevolence of Tracy McGregor, an avid book collector and outspoken supporter of higher education. In 1932, he developed the McGregor Plan for the Encouragement of Book Collecting for American College Libraries. The plan was designed to help small colleges and universities purchase rare Americana for their libraries. The Committee on Americana for College Libraries was created by the American Historical Association in 1933 to oversee the McGregor Plan. Participating colleges contributed $500 annually and the McGregor Fund matched this with another $500. Each institution was able to purchase $1,000 worth of rare Americana each year. Institutions benefiting from the McGregor plan included Albion College, Baylor University, Carlton College, Dartmouth College, Wake Forest University and Wesleyan College.

The McGregor Plan was suspended in 1943 due to World War II and was never reinstated. Today research institutions such as The Texas Collection still rely on the generosity of their benefactors to purchase rare and expensive items.