Center Awarded $1.2 Million Contract for Exxon History Project

The Exxon Mobil Corporation has selected the Center for American History as the recipient of a $1.2 million Exxon History Project contract to research and write the fifth volume of Exxon’s official corporate history. The book, scheduled for completion in 2010, will span the company’s history from 1975 through the end of the 20th century. It will be published in the Center’s Focus on American History series at UT Press.

“The Center already houses the ExxonMobil Historical Collection,” said Center Director Dr. Don Carleton. “We are now using the Collection as a major resource for researching the history of one of the world’s leading energy companies. The Exxon History Project is a prime example of the thriving synergy between our historical collections and our mission as a research institution.”

Dr. Joseph Pratt, Cullen Professor of History and Management at the University of Houston and former chairman of that institution’s history department, will author the book. Pratt, who previously taught

See Exxon History Project, P.3 »

“Last Best Hope” Documentary Launches Center’s Military Institute

With the elegant Texas Spirit Theater at The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin as a backdrop, the Center for American History recently launched its new Institute for Studies in American Military History with a screening of the PBS documentary film, “Last Best Hope: A True Story of Escape, Evasion, and Remembrance.”

The film was funded in part by the Center and was supported early on by the head of the new Institute, Dr. Thomas M. Hatfield. The film’s co-executive producer, Ramona Kelly, joined the Center on September 1 as associate director for communications and development.

“The Center for American History recognized early in the film’s production that ‘Last Best Hope’ was a historically significant documentary project,” said Center Director Dr. Don Carleton. “We are pleased to have been instrumental in bringing to PBS this World War II story of courage and sacrifice, and it

See Military Institute, P.4 »
Center Opens Gonzalez Papers at Program in San Antonio

Family members, friends, and colleagues of the late U.S. Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez gathered on Wednesday, October 25, for the official unveiling of the Henry B. Gonzalez Web site and opening of the Henry B. Gonzalez Papers. The Center for American History, in conjunction with Mrs. Bertha Gonzalez and the Gonzalez family, hosted the event at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in downtown San Antonio. Center Associate Director Patrick Cox coordinated the event.

The Gonzalez Papers are a valuable addition to the Center’s Congressional History Collection, the largest archive of Congressional history outside of Washington, D.C. The Papers contain photographs, artifacts, memorabilia, and more than 500 linear feet of documents. The archive includes Gonzalez’ personal notebooks, materials on controversial hearings, notes on his personal battles against racial segregation, and insight into the Congressional investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

“With his lifelong commitment to public service and a better life for all people, Congressman Gonzalez left a legacy of achievement that shaped the American economy and society in the last half of the twentieth century,” said Dr. Don Carleton, Center director. “We are honored to be the repository of this rich and significant component of American history.”

Former San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, who was master of ceremonies for the event, moderated a panel of dignitaries from both sides of the political spectrum who had worked with the former congressman. Guest panelists included former U.S. Representatives E. Kika de la Garza and Tom Loeffler and former U.S. Senator and Ambassador Robert Krueger.

“Henry B. served as a pioneer,” said Krueger, “breaking through the dark forest of societal restrictions and legal impediments that had been imposed by tradition and prejudice against various minority groups—African Americans, Asian Americans, and especially Hispanic Americans in this country.”

Loeffler also expressed his respect for Gonzalez, saying, “Notwithstanding our differences in party affiliation and political philosophy, Chairman Gonzalez and I were very close personal friends and compadres. He was a great American for whom I had the highest respect and admiration. I really do miss him.”

“Henry B. Gonzalez was a man you could always count on when you needed his help,” added de la Garza. “He was a man to remember.”

See Gonzalez Papers, P.3 »
Exxon History Project, « P. 1

at the University of California Berkeley and the Harvard Business School, is an energy historian who has written numerous studies of the oil industry, including recently published histories of the Amoco Corporation and the National Petroleum Council.

According to Pratt, “In the years covered in our volume, the rise of OPEC, the nationalization of many of the world’s richest oil reserves, and the onset of a cycle of boom and bust in oil prices transformed the petroleum industry. Our goal is to explain how the company successfully adapted to the extreme challenges of the recent past. Since many of these challenges still confront ExxonMobil, our history should prove useful to Rex Tillerson and other leaders of the company.”

William Hale, retired executive and former speech writer for ExxonMobil, will serve as a researcher and oral history interviewer for the book. He will also assist Pratt in writing the volume.

“In the past quarter century, ExxonMobil had to adjust to the loss of equity ownership of OPEC crude oil to managing the Exxon Valdez accident to arranging the merger with Mobil Corporation,” said Hale. “This period offers many important insights into business management in a time of dramatic change and change.”

“Oral history will be a critical tool for Dr. Pratt’s work for the book,” commented Carleton. “When the book is complete, all of Dr. Pratt’s research materials, written and recorded, will be added to the Collection. With the five-volume book series and the Center’s encompassing ExxonMobil Historical Collection, future generations will have ready access to the entire history of one of the world’s most influential companies.”

The Center’s Collection documents the long history of ExxonMobil and its predecessor, subsidiary, and affiliate companies worldwide. It also provides significant insight into the Industrial Age, presenting the business and societal impacts of this new era through the story of one of the world’s most well known corporations. The Collection consists of an estimated four million documents, 1.5 million photographs, 4,000 artifacts, and well over 30,000 moving image and sound recordings tracing the history of ExxonMobil and its corporate ancestors including Exxon, Mobil, Standard Oil Company (New Jersey), Socony, Humble Oil & Refining Company, and Magnolia Petroleum Company.

Gonzalez Papers, « P. 2

During the program, Carleton premiered the Center’s new Web site dedicated to the Gonzalez Papers. The site includes an extensive photo and image gallery, a seven-page biography, a timeline, curriculum guides, a link to the finding aid, and a special section dedicated to the Congressman’s correspondence with President Kennedy.

Additional information on the Papers can be found at www.cah.utexas.edu/feature/0611/index.php. *
Military Institute, « P. 1

is a prime example of the kinds of projects that our new Institute will foster.”

“Last Best Hope” reveals the moral courage of Belgian resistance fighters who harbored and repatriated Allied airmen downed within the borders of occupied Belgium during WWII. Original footage shot for the film as well as supporting documentation will be archived at the Center for scholarly research purposes.

Dr. Hatfield chaired the film’s advisory council and was the first to support the film with seed money for the producers’ initial research trip to Belgium in 2001. After serving for nearly 30 years as Dean of Continuing Education at the University, Dr. Hatfield will assume his new role at the Center on February 1, 2007.

“The aim of the Institute is to focus study on America’s wars and to concentrate materials for such study,” said Dr. Hatfield. “In the Institute, we take a broad view of American military history, including how war might be avoided. We are concerned with the interaction between war and society, war and economics, politics, science, technology, diplomacy, and literature. What are the recurring issues and what are the worthy causes on which people have been willing to stake their lives?”

The Institute’s portfolio will include publications, conferences, symposia, and international study trips related to WWII. But a primary focus of the Institute will be to instill in current and future generations of educators an enlightened understanding of how military engagements shape our political, cultural, and societal landscapes. Planning for the Institute’s teacher education program is currently underway.

For more information, contact Dr. Hatfield at hatfield@mail.utexas.edu or visit www.cah.utexas.edu/museums/military_history.php. ✯
The Texas Book Illuminates The University’s Rich History

A vivid picture of the history and culture of life on the Forty Acres emerges from essays collected in The Texas Book: Profiles, History, and Reminiscences of the University, the newest book in the Center for American History’s Focus on American History series published by the University of Texas Press. Twenty-two notable UT alumni and former and current UT faculty and staff contributed a total of 25 essays to this first-of-its-kind portrait of Texas’ flagship university.

Edited by Richard A. Holland, former Southern history bibliographer in the UT General Libraries, The Texas Book illuminates personalities and historic episodes from the University’s 125-year existence. Several important themes surface in the essays, including the long struggle for integration on campus; the growth of excellence within the arts, sciences, libraries, and athletics on campus, even during periods of political, administrative, or generational conflict; and the University’s reflection of Texas’ shift from being a predominantly rural to an urban state.

“The Texas Book began as a project conceived in the UT President’s Office at the beginning of former President Larry Faulkner’s tenure in 1998,” said Center Director Don Carleton. “As the home of the institutional archives of The University of Texas at Austin, the Center is pleased to have shepherded the project through its completion.”

The Center held a program, reception, and book signing in the Multi-Purpose Room in San Jacinto Residence Hall on November 17 to celebrate the publication of The Texas Book. Moderated by Dr. Carleton, the program featured a panel of the book’s contributing authors, including Holland; Lawrence Speck, W. L. Moody, Jr. Centennial Professor in Architecture at UT Austin; Don Graham, J. Frank Dobie Regents Professor in American and English Literature at UT Austin; and former UT Austin law professor Douglas Laycock, who is now Yale Kamisar Collegiate Professor of Law and Professor of Law at The University of Michigan Law School.

For more information or to purchase The Texas Book online, visit the UT Press Web site at www.utexas.edu/utpress/books/holtex.html.

Features in The Texas Book

Profiles

J. Frank Dobie • Frances Hupseth • Harry Ransom, Clarence Ayres, & J. Gilbert McAllister • B. Iden Payne • Richard Fleming • Frank Erwin • Américo Paredes • James Michener

History

Regents George Washington Brackenridge and George Washington Littlefield • B. Hall • Campus Architecture of Cass Gilbert, Herbert Greene, & Paul Cret • Integration at UT • HRC’s T. E. Hanley Collection • University Interscholastic League and Integration • UT Tower • Desegregation, Affirmative Action, and the Ten‑Percent Law

Reminiscences

Meade F. Griffin • Walter Prescott Webb • Willie Morris • Texas Ranger editors Frank Stack and Pat Brown • Betty Sue Flowers • J. M. Coetzee • Julius Whittier • Barbara Jordan

Photo by Marsha Miller, UT Austin Office of Public Affairs

Members of the panel enjoy a light-hearted comment by Larry Speck (second from left) during his remarks at the November 17 event to celebrate the publication of The Texas Book. Other panelists include Doug Laycock (left), Don Graham (second from right), and Dick Holland (right).
Center Stage
Spotlighting the Center’s programs, publications, people, and more

Exhibit Portrays Mennonites of Central and West Texas

The Center for American History’s newest photograph exhibit, Mennonites in Texas: The Quiet in the Land, is now on display through February 17, 2007, in Sid Richardson Hall, Unit 2, on The University of Texas at Austin campus. The exhibit features photographs by Laura Camden and Susan Gaetz Duarte of Mennonite communities in Lott and Seminole, Texas.

Camden and Gaetz Duarte separately documented two very different Mennonite communities, one in Central Texas (Gaetz Duarte) and the other in West Texas (Camden), as Masters Degree projects for the UT School of Journalism. The Center’s exhibit includes a selection of the photographers’ research notes and journals, correspondence, printed material about the Mennonite faith, and materials documenting the recent publication of their book by Texas A&M Press, with a foreword by former Governor Ann Richards, whose papers are available for research in the Center’s archives.

“A highlight of the exhibit,” noted Center exhibits curator Lynn Bell, “is a handmade quilt crafted by members of the Mennonite community in Seminole for Senator Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr. in appreciation for his assistance during immigration difficulties in the 1970s. Mrs. Bentsen has generously loaned the quilt for this exhibit.”

Senator Bentsen’s papers are part of the Center’s Congressional Collections.

Camden and Gaetz Duarte have donated the exhibit of 50 photographs and other material related to their projects to the Center’s photograph collections. The Center will present a public program featuring the photographers’ discussion of their photodocumentary project and experiences in January or February 2007. ■
Bullock History Museum Exhibit Features Winedale Quilts

The Center for American History’s important collections of historic quilts are featured in several new exhibits and initiatives that celebrate, preserve, and protect this significant form of American folk art.

Nine quilts from the Winedale Decorative Arts Collection are featured in “Miss Ima’s Quilts,” an exhibit at The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin. The exhibit, open from October 28, 2006 to January 7, 2007, features 25 of the quilts collected by Miss Ima Hogg to furnish three historic properties that she donated to the people of Texas: Bayou Bend in Houston, the Varner–Hogg Plantation, and Winedale. Quilts in the exhibit date from the late 1700s to the early 1900s and showcase Miss Ima’s vision as a philanthropist and preservationist.

Visitors to Winedale, the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, and the John Nance Garner Museum can enjoy “Put a Roof Over Our Head,” a traveling exhibit from the Alliance for American Quilts. The exhibit will be open from February 5 to March 17, 2007.

The Alliance and the Center are also collaborating on The Quilt Index, a centralized, online repository of photographs and information about quilts in public and private collections (www.quiltindex.org). By late 2007, the Index is expected to include more than 15,000 photographs and records. The Center’s Assistant Director Brenda Gunn is managing the Index project.

The Center will add 85 quilts to the Index from the Winedale Decorative Arts Collection, consisting of Miss Ima Hogg’s donation, quilts from the Texas Memorial Museum, and the Kathleen McCrady Quilt History collection. The Center is also contributing information on 150 quilts featured in the two-volume publication Lone Stars: A Legacy of Texas Quilts, as well as selected items from the Texas Quilt Search.

The Center’s contribution to the Index has been supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. For more information, visit www.cah.utexas.edu/museums/winedale.php.

Book Chronicles Residents of Colorado County, Texas

In Leavin’ a Testimony: Portraits from Rural Texas, Patsy Cravens presents photographs and stories from residents – both black and white – of Colorado County, Texas. Cravens, an award-winning producer, photographer, and writer, began the project in the 1980s, chronicling the rich experiences of her subjects and topics such as sharecropping, segregation, family, and faith. The book is one of the newest in the Center for American History’s Focus on American History series, edited by Dr. Don Carleton and published by the University of Texas Press. The Center also houses Cravens’ photographic archive. For more information, visit the UT Press website at www.utexas.edu/utpress/books/cralea.html.
Gardening Ideas Grow at the Winedale Oktober Gartenfest

Garden aficionados from throughout Central Texas gathered on the grounds of the historic Winedale complex in Round Top for the 13th annual Oktober Gartenfest on October 27 and 28. The event featured a gardening symposium, plant sale, and tours of outstanding area gardens.

Gartenfest is hosted by the Center for American History in partnership with the Texas Cooperative Extension, the Texas A&M System, the Herb Society of America, and the International Festival-Institute at Round Top.

As in years past, Gartenfest opening festivities included a reception, dinner, and program on October 27 at the Menke House at Festival Hill. Renowned Houston gardener Agelia McGowan entertained and informed guests with her keynote speech, “From the Garden to the Table.”

Lectures during the day-long symposium on October 28 included:

» “Practical and Pretty—Good-Looking Gardens that are Easy on the Gardener” by Kathy Huber, well

See Gartenfest, P.9 »

Renovations Will Improve Museum’s Access and Appearance

For the first time since Sam Rayburn opened the doors to his Bonham, Texas, library in 1957, significant renovations are underway to improve the access and appearance of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum.

Following a full assessment of the needs of the museum and its facilities, repairs to the museum’s roof were deemed a top priority, with work scheduled to begin in early 2007. Improvements will also be made to protect the building’s exterior, windows, and entry plaza. These efforts will preserve this historic structure and protect the archives and collections. The renovations will also address accessibility issues, notably with the construction of ADA-approved restrooms. In addition, a more efficient heating and

See Rayburn Renovations, P.9 »
UVALDE FUNDRAISER WILL FEATURE EXHIBIT OF RARE RANCHING ITEMS

The Friends of the John Nance Garner Museum and the First State Bank of Uvalde will host a gala fundraising dinner on April 3, 2007, featuring an exhibit of rare items from the Center for American History documenting ranching from early Spanish colonial Texas to the 20th century. Guests will have the opportunity to view early historical manuscripts, as well as several historic saddles, tack, and other ranching artifacts from the Center’s Artifact Collection.

“We are very proud to bring this exhibit to Uvalde and the surrounding communities, which are so historically rooted in ranching,” said Center Associate Director Dr. Patrick Cox.

The exhibit will move to the bank’s McNelly room April 4 and 5, and will be at the Garner Museum April 10 through May 4. For more information, call 830 / 278 5018 or visit http://www.cah.utexas.edu/museums/garner.php. 

RAYBURN RENOVATIONS, « P. 8

The air conditioning system will be installed.

Some renovations have already been completed. New lighting has been installed in the museum’s galleries and hallways, including fiber optic exhibit lighting and track spotlights in the galleries. And the statue of Sam Rayburn at the museum’s entrance was completely refurbished for the Museum’s 50th anniversary in December 2005.

The improvements are being made through funding provided by a Save America’s Treasures grant, by The University of Texas System, and by many additional contributions from area foundations, civic organizations, and individuals.


GARTENFEST, « P. 8

The Gartenfest, a local organic farmer and gardener.

Also on October 28, seasoned and novice gardeners alike were treated to the Gartenfest Plant Sale, which featured an array of hard-to-find, heirloom, novel, and rare specimens.

Capping this year’s Oktober Gartenfest were tours of the exceptional gardens of Charlotte Meyer and Russell Miller, Milt and Barbara Williams, and Elisa Henderson. 

» “Our Local Food Heritage” by Brad Stufflebeam,
John Quincy Adams Letter Illuminates Early Texas History

The Center recently acquired a historically significant letter penned by John Quincy Adams that enhances the extensive holdings in the Center’s Research and Collections division and is particularly relevant to the history of Texas and the American South. Written to President James Monroe when Adams served as Secretary of State, the letter is Adams’ personal copy written in his distinctive hand, dated July 20, 1819. In the letter, Adams discusses the federal government’s negotiations with Spain that resulted in the Adams-Onis Treaty (which settled the western border of the Louisiana Purchase and the terms of the purchase of Florida by the United States).

The letter also mentions “this new expedition against the Province of Texas” — an effort that would later be known as the Long Expedition, named for its commander James Long, a merchant and doctor in Natchez, Mississippi. Natchez area citizens comprised the center of the resistance to the boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase as set forth in the Adams-Onis treaty. The expedition was one of the early efforts by Anglos to occupy Texas in defiance of Spanish ownership. The Long Expedition failed, and the United States renounced any claim to Texas in the watershed treaty.

Linked to the Center’s existing Natchez Trace Collection and to its records documenting the Long Expedition, the Adams’ letter is a valuable resource for researchers seeking to understand the politics and influences surrounding the Louisiana Purchase. A discussion of the letter will be part of Center Director Dr. Don Carleton’s presentation during the Natchez History Conference, co-sponsored by the Center, which will be held in Natchez, Mississippi, February 7 through February 10, 2007.

Researcher Spotlight ➔ Frances T. “Sissy” Farenthold Papers

The history of the state of Texas took a momentous and unexpected turn in the 1972 Democratic Primary election when the incumbent governor, Preston Smith, and the presumed heir to the governor’s mansion, Lieutenant Governor Ben Barnes, were defeated by State Representative Frances T. “Sissy” Farenthold and rancher, banker, and former state representative Dolph Briscoe, Jr. In the runoff election, Briscoe defeated Farenthold, who had distinguished herself as a leader in the movement to bring accountability to the state capital in a volatile era of political scandal.

Former state representative Sue Schechter of Bellaire is currently using the Center for American History’s vast political resources to study this era in Texas politics and examine its larger historical ramifications on both Texas and national politics. Among the many resources she is studying are the Frances T. “Sissy” Farenthold Papers, the Dolph Briscoe Papers, the Sam Rayburn Papers, and the John Henry Faulk Papers. The Center has the largest collection of congressional archives outside of Washington, D.C.
PRIVATE SUPPORT CRUCIAL TO CENTER’S PUBLIC WORK

As an organized research unit of The University of Texas at Austin, the Center for American History facilitates, sponsors, and supports teaching, research, and public education in U.S. history. In support of its mission, the Center acquires, preserves, and makes available for research archival, artifact, and rare book collections and sponsors exhibitions, conferences, video documentaries, oral history projects, and publications.

The Center for American History has four locations: Research & Collections and Studies in Texas History, located in Sid Richardson Hall on the UT-Austin campus; the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, in Bonham, Texas; the John Nance Garner Museum, in Uvalde, Texas; and Winedale, a rural museum located near Round Top, halfway between Houston and Austin.

The Center’s collection focus is on the history of Texas, the South, and the Rocky Mountain West, as well as congressional history, news media and photojournalism, the energy industry, the touring entertainment industry, and other national-in-scope themes.

Public funds provide for only a portion of the annual operating costs of the Center’s many educational programs, exhibitions, conferences, symposia, publications, historic structures, and grant-funded initiatives. The Center also depends on private support to make possible many of its significant archival acquisitions. Virtually all of the Center’s collections and programs are open to the public. There are several ways you can contribute:

GIVE AN UNRESTRICTED OR RESTRICTED CASH GIFT —
You can give a cash gift by mailing a check or money order to the address for the Center’s Administrative Offices (see above right). You can also give a cash gift online:

www.utexas.edu/supportut/hookedonutexas

A cash gift can be paid in one lump sum, or pledged to be paid in installments.

APPLY FUNDS TO AN EXISTING ENDOWMENT, OR CREATE A NEW ONE —
There are currently nineteen endowments that support the Center. Most of these endowments are restricted to support particular collections or initiatives within the Center. An endowment can be established or increased in one lump sum, or the amount can be pledged to be paid in installments.

DONATE A COLLECTION OR ITEMS OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL —
We will be happy to discuss with you potential gifts of collections or items of historical significance, to determine if they are an appropriate fit for the Center’s collections.

MAKE A PLANNED GIFT —
You may designate a future gift to the Center to be given through your estate. Visit the University’s Gift Planning website at www.utexas.edu/supportut/giftplanning/index.html to learn more about charitable estate planning at the University.

Some gifts to the Center for American History bring the donor benefits from the University, as well as benefits from the Center. If you are interested in giving a potentially tax-deductible gift, please call Ramona Kelly, Associate Director, at 512 / 495 4696 or 512 / 495 4684, or contact her by email at ramonakelly@mail.utexas.edu, to discuss your options. No gift is too large or too small in helping to preserve American history.
Center Launches Dynamic New Web Site

If you haven’t seen the Center for American History’s new Web site, log on now: http://www.cah.utexas.edu. What you will find is nothing short of a transformation from the previous text-centric site to one that engages the eye and invites exploration of the myriad treasures in the Center’s collections.

The site’s new graphic design and easy-to-navigate architecture resulted from close collaboration between the Center’s Web staff and the UT Office of Public Affairs Design Center. Focus groups with a wide variety of user groups drove the team’s decision to highlight the Center’s distinguishing collections, museums, and projects.

“One of our goals was to create a dynamic home page template for showcasing the events, exhibits, and acquisitions that make the Center unique,” said Center Associate Director Alison Beck. “We also wanted a user-friendly venue for our educational sites and collaborative digital projects as well as large digital media repository — all with a warm human touch.”

Beck worked with the UT Design Center’s Dave Holston and Guy Kingsbery to create the new site. Center webmasters Steve Williams and Linda Newland migrated content from the previous site and have published two new Web features, the most recent one focusing on the Center’s Henry B. Gonzalez Papers.  

A new graphic design that includes Flash animation enhances the Center’s revamped Web site.

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The Center for American History is a special collections library, archive, and museum that facilitates research and sponsors programs on the history of the United States. The Center supports research and education by acquiring, preserving, and making available research collections and by sponsoring exhibitions, conferences, symposia, oral history projects, publications, and grant-funded initiatives.

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