Rayburn Library Celebrates Fiftieth Anniversary

The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum hosted a gala celebration on December 9, 2005, in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the groundbreaking of the historic site. More than 500 people attended the event, held on the Museum grounds in Bonham, Texas. The ceremony included speakers, music, recognition of former employees of Sam Rayburn, and recognition of the listing of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum on the National Register of Historic Places on May 6, 2005.

Featured speakers at the event included Robert V. Remini, Historian of the United States House of Representatives; Larry R. Faulkner, president of The University of Texas at Austin; Rep. Ralph Hall, 4th District of Texas; Rep. Kenny Marchant, 24th District of Texas; Rep. Joe Barton, 6th District of Texas; William H. Cunningham, retired chancellor of the University of Texas System; Mayor Roy Floyd, Bonham; and Don Carleton, director of the UT Center for American History. Presentation of a plaque to President Faulkner recognizing See 50th Anniversary, P.4 »

Calendar of Events

April 22  2ND ANNUAL FRIENDS OF SAM RAYBURN ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET
        Legacy Ridge Country Club, Bonham → 6:00 p.m.  (ticket required)

May 1  DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS → 5:00 p.m.
        Marjorie P. McKnight Scholarship and H. G. Dulaney Scholarship

May 17  SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT RECEPTION
        Sam Rayburn Library and Museum → 4:30 p.m.

May 29  CLOSED FOR MEMORIAL DAY

July 4  CLOSED FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

Sam Rayburn Library and Museum
P.O. Box 309, 800 West Sam Rayburn Drive, Bonham, Texas 75418
Telephone 903 / 583 2455  Fax 903 / 583 7394
Museum hours → Monday – Friday 9:00 – 5:00 ~ Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 ~ closed Sunday
Center for American History website: www.cah.utexas.edu

The Center for American History is a special collections library, archive, and museum at The University of Texas at Austin 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.
Wartime Role Outlined in Rayburn House Museum Exhibit

by William A. McWhorter
Texas Historical Commission

March 11, 2006, marked the sixty-fifth anniversary of the passage of the Lend-Lease Act, legislation Speaker Sam Rayburn shepherded through Congress that was of vital importance to the Allied war effort in Europe. In continued remembrance of preserving Speaker Rayburn’s wartime legacy, the Texas Historical Commission’s Texas in World War II initiative, in cooperation with the Sam Rayburn House Museum, opened a new exhibit on March 18th titled Together They Won: Sam Rayburn and the Fourth Congressional District in World War II.

This exhibit is designed to educate visitors at the Sam Rayburn House Museum, which is administered by the Texas Historical Commission and located two miles west of Bonham on State Highway 56, about Speaker Rayburn’s critical role in American wartime politics from 1939 to 1946. The exhibit will be on display for the next six months.

During World War II, Speaker Rayburn’s activities ranged from successfully shepherding significant wartime legislation through the U.S. House of Representatives to responding diligently to his Fourth District constituents’ requests and the concerns of his so-called grumlims (critics of the war effort). In addition to those congressional duties, Speaker Rayburn was also directly accountable for millions of dollars in federal spending assigned to his district.

Austin College Intern Program Utilizes Rayburn Resources

by Dr. Light Cummins
Department of History, Austin College

Austin College has always had a strong relationship with the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum. Professor Emeritus Edward Hake Phillips, who taught at the college from the late 1950s until the 1980s, actively supported the Rayburn Library in a wide variety of ways. Today, that relationship continues, especially in a summer intern program which has become a feature of the Austin College Center for Southwestern and Mexican Studies during the last three years. For the last three summers, Austin College history students have worked during June and July as summer interns on a variety of projects at the Rayburn Library.

The intern stipends for these students have been paid by various grant programs at Austin College, including the Lilly Endowment and the Summerlee Foundation. These students have worked with the library staff in a number of activities, including website design, research on the life of Mr. Rayburn, and tasks related to the historic nature of the building. Each of them has reported that they learned a great deal and gained a tremendous appreciation for the mission of the Rayburn Library as a historical resource not only for North Texas, but the entire state.

In addition, several Austin college students have conducted historical research in the collections at the Rayburn Library in recent years. One of them wrote a senior honors thesis on Mr. Sam’s role in securing congressional approval for various Depression-era governmental projects in the region. Two other students have also conducted term-paper research in the Rayburn Library.

The Center for Southwestern and Mexican Studies at Austin College seeks to provide Austin College students with meaningful experiences to learn about the living history of this state. The partnership between Austin College and the Rayburn Library is becoming a very important part of this effort. The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum has greatly enriched the teaching of Texas history at Austin College for many years, and a continuing relationship between the Rayburn Library and Austin College interns will build a foundation for greater cooperation to the mutual benefit of both.
Spotlight on the Sam Rayburn Papers ➔ General Eisenhower

The Sam Rayburn Papers at the Center for American History contain a variety of papers, photographs, artifacts, and political and personal memorabilia documenting the life and political career of Sam Rayburn, as well as the significant events of twentieth-century American history in which he played a key role. The Sam Rayburn Papers are housed and available to the public at the Center’s Research and Collections division on the Austin campus of the University of Texas; additionally, microfilm copies of his papers are available for use at the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum in Bonham.

The photograph at the right demonstrates the important role Sam Rayburn played as one of the leaders of the nation’s government during a time of war. Rayburn was Speaker of the U.S. House during the entirety of America’s involvement in World War II, from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor to the dropping of atomic bombs, as well as during all but four of the years from the onset of the Cold War with the Soviet Union until his death in 1961.

General Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, led the D-Day invasion of Europe and the military defeat of the European Axis powers. Rayburn’s leadership in the House secured the basis for the war effort—including the dramatic 1941 fight for draft extension and the secret funding of the Manhattan Project—as well as the basis for the peace, most notably the funding called for by the foreign-assistance programs that rebuilt the war-torn economies in Europe and Asia.

Museum Professionals Attend Winedale Museum Seminar

Heather Trent, research associate at the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, attended the Winedale Museum Seminar from January 29 to February 4 at the Center for American History’s Winedale division, near Round Top, Texas. The week-long immersion program is conducted by the Center for American History in consultation with the Texas Association of Museums.

The Winedale Museum Seminar is designed to provide continuing education to museum professionals who are seeking to enhance basic skills of museum administration or to study, in-depth, particular museum issues in a collegial, hands-on setting. It also gives participants the opportunity to network and share ideas with other museum professionals during informal evening gatherings. This year’s seminar focused on developing leadership skills relating to all aspects of resource development. Participants covered topics ranging from capital campaigns to grant writing to planned giving.
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the listing on the National Register was made by Dee J. Kelly, who is president of the Sam Rayburn Foundation and also a former Rayburn employee. Other former employees reunited for the occasion included H. G. Dulaney, Francis Kimbrough, Evelyn Cross, and W. E. Wilcox.

Rep. Hall knew Speaker Rayburn and now occupies the congressional seat held by Rayburn. In his remarks Hall stated that Rayburn “really was one of the great men of the century. From the New Deal to the Cold War, Sam Rayburn was instrumental in shaping history.” Rep. Barton is now chairman of the powerful Energy and Commerce Committee. The only other Texan to hold that influential position was Sam Rayburn, a man Barton referred to in his remarks as “the greatest Texan that ever lived.”

Dr. Remini, a nationally recognized scholar of American politics, said that Speaker Rayburn’s contributions rank him among the most important Americans in our nation’s history. “Sam Rayburn changed the course of American History,” Remini stated in his speech. Pres. Faulkner spoke of the renowned integrity of Sam Rayburn. “That level of integrity should be an example to all who would hold public office,” Faulkner pointed out. “The University embraces its responsibility to the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum and I look

Redesigned Exhibits Bring New Appeal to Rayburn Museum

The Center for American History completed a major refurbishment of the exhibits at the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum in the months prior to the Rayburn Library’s fiftieth-anniversary celebration.

Commencing with the recent December 9 celebration, visitors to the Museum are now treated to newly redesigned Rayburn exhibits throughout. Center for American History exhibits curator Lynn Bell, working with Drew Patterson, an independent exhibits designer based in Austin, created a new, updated showcase of Sam Rayburn’s contribution to American society. Most of the artifacts previously on display remain so, but changes to lighting and design bring new meaning and appeal to the material. Also, a new feature is that the main floor in the Main Reading Room has been cleared for displaying traveling exhibits from the Center for American History, with different exhibits featured throughout the course of a year. The first of these exhibits, Kings of the River: Steamboat Transportation in the American South, is now on display (see article on page 6).

The statue of Sam Rayburn at the entrance to the Library was recently
Representing the former employees of Sam Rayburn, Dee J. Kelly (behind lectern) presents UT-Austin president Larry R. Faulkner with a plaque recognizing the listing of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum on the National Register of Historic Places. Standing on the podium are (l-r) former employees H. G. Dulaney, W. E. Wilcox, Evelyn Cross, Francis “Rene” Kimbrough, and Kelly; President Faulkner; and Center for American History representatives Director Don Carleton and Assistant Director Patrick Cox.

Music for the program was provided by the Arlington Community Band. In addition, the Reverend Cecil Jones and the Bethlehem Baptist Sanctuary Choir of Bonham performed. Following the program, the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum hosted a reception to open to the public the redesigned exhibits in the Museum.

Forward to the day when the Speaker of the House says she was first inspired to run for public office when her parents took her on a tour of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum.”

The Bonham High School marching band, under the direction of Roger Ashcraft, performed before the ceremony.
The Center for American History

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116 exhibition prints were acquired by the Center for American History and added to its Littlefield Southern History Collections, one the nation’s principal resources for research on topics related to the history of the eleven states that seceded from the Union in 1860 and 1861.

Doretha Gay, administrative assistant, recently retired from the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum after eighteen years of service to the legacy of Speaker Rayburn. Doretha plans for rest and relaxation in her retirement, and her daily presence at the Library will be missed by her friends by whose side she has worked for so many years.

SRL&M Thanks You!!

The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum thanks the following organizations for their generous support:

- Red River Regional Hospital (Northeast Medical Center)
- Hoblitelle Foundation
- Bonham Lion’s Club
- Clara Blackford Smith and W. Aubrey Smith Foundation
- Glaser Family Charitable Foundation
- Kiwanis Club of Bonham
- Friends of Sam Rayburn

It also thanks the following school districts, which supported the fiftieth-anniversary activities at the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum:

- L. H. Rather Jr. High (Karol Romans, Principal)
- Dodd City ISD
- Ector ISD
- Fannindel ISD
- Honey Grove ISD
- Leonard ISD
- Sam Rayburn ISD
- Savoy ISD

“Kings of the River” Highlights Importance of River Trade

An exhibition of thirty-three images titled Kings of the River: Steamboat Transportation in the American South opened in the Main Reading Room of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum on February 16. These images are a visual record of the importance of nineteenth-century river trade to Texas and its commercial and cultural link to the state’s southern neighbors. The exhibit will be on view through the summer, and is free and open to the public.

The riverboat images in the exhibit were captured by Henry Norman, a photographer who worked in Natchez, Mississippi, from 1870 until his death in 1913. Norman’s camera documented daily life in the historic riverport town of Natchez in the last decades of the nineteenth century, when steamboats and cotton still dominated transportation and commerce. Henry Norman’s photographs provide a remarkable visual record of the great paddlewheel steamboats, including images of their crews, passengers, and luxurious interiors.

The images of riverboats in this exhibit were curated by Thomas Gandy, a Natchez physician, and his wife, Joan Gandy. The Gandys acquired the Norman collection and spent twenty-five years making prints from the glass-plate negatives. All 116 exhibition prints were acquired by the Center for American History and added to its Littlefield Southern History Collections, one the nation’s principal resources for research on topics related to the history of the eleven states that seceded from the Union in 1860 and 1861.

Doretha Gay Retires

Doretha Gay, administrative assistant, recently retired from the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum after eighteen years of service to the legacy of Speaker Rayburn. Doretha plans for rest and relaxation in her retirement, and her daily presence at the Library will be missed by her friends by whose side she has worked for so many years.

Doretha Gay (behind cake) is congratulated on her retirement by her Sam Rayburn Library and Museum colleagues (l-r) Heather Trent, H. G. Dulaney, Patrick Cox, and Kim Burpo.
PRIVATE SUPPORT CRUCIAL TO CENTER’S PUBLIC WORK

The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum is a component of the Center for American History’s Congressional History division. This division within the Center comprises one of the nation’s most important collections of congressional history. In addition to the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, the Congressional History division includes the John Nance Garner Museum in Uvalde, Texas, as well as the papers of more than fifty former and current members of Congress, including Sam Houston, Morris Sheppard, James Buchanan, Maury Maverick, Ralph Yarborough, Joe Kilgore, J. J. “Jake” Pickle, and Lloyd Bentsen.

The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum was opened in 1957. In 1991, the Sam Rayburn Foundation transferred ownership to The University of Texas at Austin. When the Center for American History was created at UT-Austin in 1991, it absorbed from the UT General Libraries the Barker Texas History Center and the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum.

Public funds provide for only a portion of the annual operating costs of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum. There are several ways you can help ensure the success of this important Texas resource:

GIVE AN UNRESTRICTED OR RESTRICTED CASH GIFT —
You can give a cash gift by mailing a check or money order to the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum. You can also give a cash gift online:
WWW.UTEXAS.EDU/SUPPORTUT/GIVEONLINE
(Make a gift online today)
(In the “Select an Area” drop-down window on the second page of this website, be sure to designate “American History, Center for” and specify in the accompanying text box that you would like your gift to be used for the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum.)

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 is currently one endowment that supports the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum — the Sam Rayburn Library Endowment, established in December 1990. 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 —
If you have a collection or items of archival material that you think might enhance the collections at the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, or any of the other congressional history collections at the Center, we will be happy to discuss your potential gift to determine if the materials 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.

Some gifts to the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum bring the donor benefits from the University, as well as benefits from the Center for American History and its Sam Rayburn Library and Museum. If you are interested in giving a potentially tax-deductible gift, please call David Dettmer, Assistant to the Director, at the Center’s administrative offices at 512 / 495 4684, or email him at ddettmer@mail.utexas.edu, to discuss your options. No gift is too large or too small in helping to preserve American history. ✽
The Friends of Sam Rayburn will host the second-annual Friends of Sam Rayburn Awards Banquet on Saturday, April 22, 6:00 p.m., at the Legacy Ridge Country Club in Bonham, Texas. Tickets for this fundraising event are $100 per person, and may be purchased from the Friends of Sam Rayburn.

The banquet will honor Elizabeth May, the recipient of this year’s H. G. Dulaney Award for Public Service. Born in Ravenna, Texas, Elizabeth May comes from a strong tradition of public service. Her mother, Mrs. John Palmore, served on the original Board of Trustees for the Sam Rayburn Foundation, whose main goal was to raise funds to build the Sam Rayburn Library. Elizabeth May has worked sixty-three years at what was originally the First National Bank, now the American Bank of Texas, in Bonham.

The Friends of Sam Rayburn organization functions primarily to assist in the numerous projects and activities of the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum, administered by the University of Texas Center for American History, and the Sam Rayburn House Museum, located two miles west of Bonham on State Highway 56 and administered by the Texas Historical Commission.

For information about the Friends of Sam Rayburn or the annual banquet, please contact the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum at 903 / 583 2455 or the Sam Rayburn House Museum at 903 / 583 5558.

Friends of Sam Rayburn Hosts Fundraiser Awards Banquet April 22