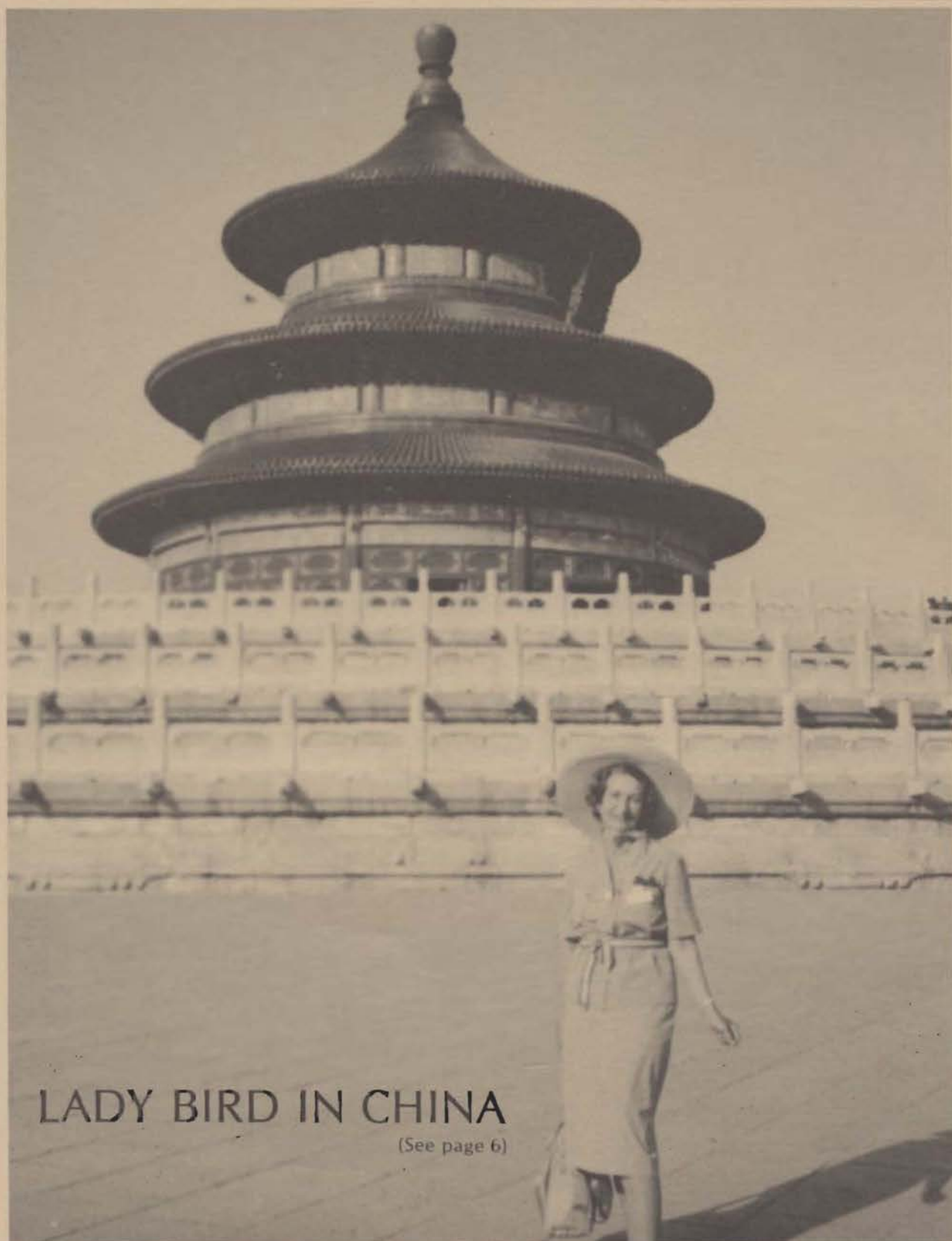


# Among Friends of LBJ

ISSUE NUMBER XXIII, SEPTEMBER 25, 1981

A NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE LBJ LIBRARY



LADY BIRD IN CHINA

(See page 6)

# Visitors to the Library



Ambassador from Ecuador and Mrs. Richard Crespo, who visited the Library in June, look at a gift from the people of Ecuador to President Johnson.

August 27: Once again the Library served cake and punch to its visitors to commemorate the birthdate of Lyndon Baines Johnson.



A group of blind or visually impaired students from a summer camp in Fort Worth toured the Library in July. The children became acquainted with the exhibits in their own way.

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Editor: Lawrence D. Reed

Research Assistance: Charles Corkran, Marlene White, Mike Gillette

Photography: Frank Wolfe, Paul Chevalier, Len De Prang

Staff Assistance: Lou Anne Missildine, Yolanda Boozer





Lew Wasserman, member of the Board of Directors of the LBJ Foundation, steps to the stage of the LBJ Auditorium. The occasion: the introduction in Texas of "The First Lady: A Portrait of Lady Bird Johnson," a film commissioned for showing in the Library by Mr. and Mrs. Wasserman. (The film's premiere in Washington, D.C. was reported in the May 15 newsletter.)



BAKER



OBERDORFER



KNOTT



WENK

## ACQUISITIONS

The Library recently acquired the personal papers of Lawson Knott, Don Oberdorfer, Edward Wenk, Jr., and sizable additions to material contributed in 1969 by John Baker.

Mr. Knott's papers included records covering his years with the General Services Administration, in which he last served as administrator.

The Oberdorfer material consists of varied working papers accumulated in his role as journalist and author and used in the preparation of his book, *Tet!*

Dr. Wenk's donation reflects his service as executive secretary of the National Council on Marine Resources and Engineering Development during the Johnson Administration.

The Baker papers supplement records acquired earlier covering his long service in the Department of Agriculture.

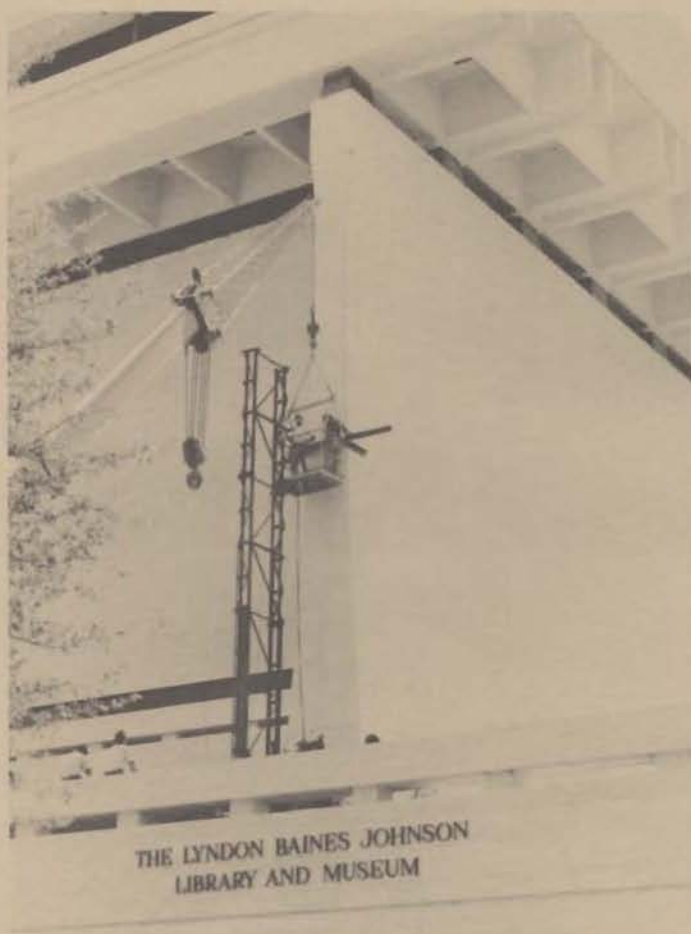
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"An American Tragedy," an oil painting by Gustav Likan, based on the family of President John F. Kennedy mourning his assassination, was given to the Library by Ann Cofrin Baldeschwiler, Austin art patron. The painting was displayed in the Library lobby until the renovation began. Gary Yarrington, curator of the museum, calls it an "important historical, as well as artistic, acquisition."



Gustav Likan (right) turns over his painting, "An American Tragedy," to Museum Curator Gary Yarrington. With them is Joan Curtis, representing the donor.

# Renovation of the Museum and Oth



**1.** Outside, cranes lift construction materials to the roof of the building.



**2.** Inside, workers tear out walls.

**4.** Three posters along the corridor which leads to the temporary exhibit tell the whole story. (Read from right to left, as the visitor sees the posters.)

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**LBJ LIBRARY AND MUSEUM ENTRANCE**

**IN THE MEANTIME . . .**  
 We invite you to enjoy a special exhibition "The Johnson Years," and . . .

**DON'T MISS SEEING . . .**

- The Oval Office exhibit (8th Floor)
- Political Campaigns: 1964-1976 (2nd Floor)
- "USA: 1880's" (2nd Floor)

"The First Lady: A Portrait of Lady Bird Johnson," a half-hour film shown at 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. in the second floor theatre.

For additional information inquire at the information desk.



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**LBJ LIBRARY AND MUSEUM ENTRANCE**

**THE GOOD NEWS!**  
 In May 1982 we will open with many new exhibits.

Included will be sections on President Johnson's early years, the congressional period, his tenure as Majority Leader, the Great Society, Viet Nam, the space program and head of state gifts. There will be an orientation theatre, a new sales desk and additional rest rooms.

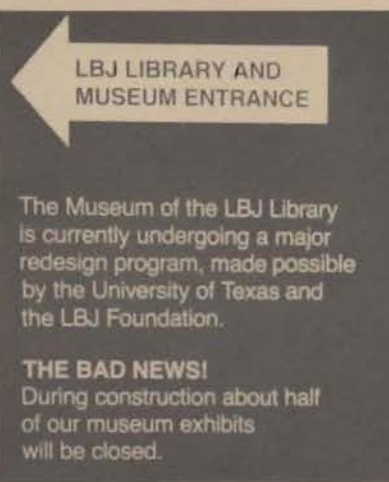
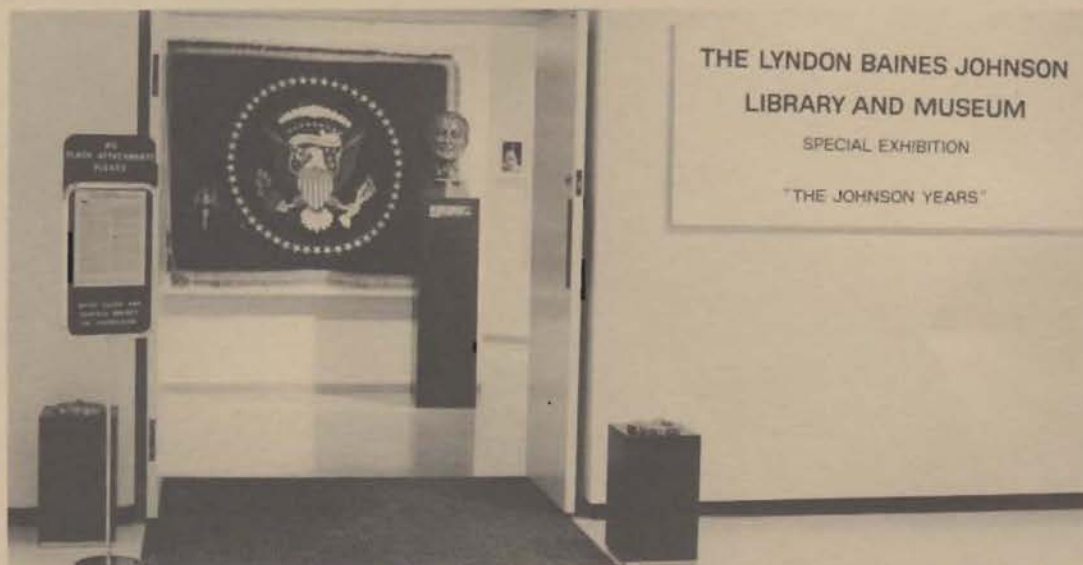
We apologize for the temporary inconvenience but the results will be well worth it.



# er Areas at the Library Begins



3. While construction is in progress, visitors use a temporary entrance (left) to a temporary exhibit (below) which offers a sampling of the Library's collections.





# FORMER FIRST LADY VISITS CHINA

Last June the members of the Board of Trustees of the National Geographic Society traveled to the People's Republic of China. One member of the Board, Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, later recalled some of her experiences on that trip in an interview with Mike Gillette, who is in charge of the Library's Oral History program.

"There were about 25 of us," Mrs. Johnson reported, "five members of the Board . . . and the rest from the Committee on Research and Explorations . . . archaeologists, anthropologists, an etomologist, an ornithologist, an historian. A varied and learned and interesting group. From [our] arrival in Beijing—which used to be Peking—on June 5, for the next 18 days I was just engulfed, deluged, swallowed with impressions and learning."

Following are some of those impressions, excerpted from the interview.

## The Chinese People

I liked them, and I think they liked us . . . They were extremely cordial, interested, and once we left the capital, the people were also very curious. They would gather around us and look, and although they couldn't talk to us, they were friendly.

## The Great Wall

In spite of how much you have heard and read about The Great Wall, you somehow are not prepared for it. It is so huge. It marches across the landscape right on a spine of the mountain, as far as your eye can see. You realize that it goes on for miles and miles . . . Five horses can ride abreast on top of the wall, and there's a sizable balustrade on each side. It's rough stone, and it's incredibly thick . . . That wall really did what it was intended to do, which was to keep out the barbarian hordes of the Mongols. It was finally pierced by Genghis Khan in 1200 or so. As we came down from the mountain later in the day, we stopped at the Mongol Arch which was built to celebrate the victory of the Mongols having pierced the wall, and overflowed into China and taken China. There on that wall, still marvelously visible, is a story of that conquest in six languages . . . not a one of which I could recognize—so varied have been the people of our world.

## The Warriors at Xian

Another beautiful experience was at Xian, site of a discovery some six or eight years ago of life-size, maybe heroic size, terra cotta warriors—probably 6,000 in number. Each one a real portrait, the face and body of a human being. These were the elite corps of the Emperor Qin. That was a big advance; it was so nice he didn't bury alive with him 6,000 people and horses to commemorate his death and to accompany him into the next life! That habit had existed prior to his time. After him there was less burying concubines, soldiers, servants, retainers alive with the emperor when he died, and more of some sort of symbolic figures to accompany him in the afterlife.

Some of these terra cotta figures were just absolutely in mint condition; some of them, of course, have just been



Mrs. Johnson with the group's guides on a suspension bridge over the Min river, which flows from the mountains of Sichuan Province.

smashed to smithereens. They had built a roof about them, then they covered it with dirt when they buried them. But the roof caved in and some of the terra cotta figures were smashed. I think that about six hundred were recovered in beautiful condition.

We walked up steps and along on a walkway around the sides of a great big hole in the ground approximately the size of a football field. We looked down onto all of these erect, guarding figures. Then we came to the area where there are some broken shards of them. There were some archaeologists down there with their little tools and brushes, working away on a finger or an ear or a horse's hoof or a man's head. They will of course put as many as they can back together, and they haven't finished digging up the whole thing, because China is a vast storehouse of man's life for centuries. So whenever they build a highway or build a new building they are quite likely going to find some ancient relic of the past.

## Reforestation

One modern thing that I applaud is the commitment of labor and determination to reforestation. Although now there is a lot of barren, arid land, they're going to reforest it, I do believe. Every city street, every highway, every country lane, and indeed many of the fields had rows of trees, at least one row, sometimes as many as four rows. That does so soften and add an aesthetic appearance to these cities that are of mud or brick or plaster, and to the countryside which is so often arid. The trees changed in different regions. Poplar was very common. There were many times when I would look at a lane with a row of poplar trees along it and think I was looking at a French countryside. And plane trees (fir to sycamore) were much used, also ginkgos and various types of eucalyptus. Several guides told me that each citizen—man, woman and child—was expected to plant a tree each year. The government furnishes the saplings.





The travelers traverse a section of the Great Wall of China.

### Food

We had food in all sorts of places. The food was extremely varied. One of my hosts said, "Yes, we can make forty-eight dishes out of a goat." And they eat things that we don't. All sorts of marine vegetables, seaweed in various different forms. They had the most marvelous vegetables in the greatest quantities. But oh, the tomatoes and the eggplant and the beans! The beans grow on trellises that are so artistic. The bean trellises alone would make an exquisite picture.

A banquet consists of eighteen to twenty-two courses. They also serve meats whole. The fish comes with its gaping mouth wide open and its tail and gills, and the chicken with its red comb. And of course the pig comes with his head, curly tail and everything on. Thank goodness the Peking duck didn't come with feathers! Some things I never tried, and I'm sorry if I offended anyone. I did not want those thousand-year-old eggs. I like them not more than a week old.

### A Trip Through the Mountains

It was as if the whole countryside was sitting to be painted into a Chinese scroll—mountains just like dragons' teeth—and indeed that's what they call them, they're so pointed and sharp and just straight up and heavily forested in conifers of many kinds. The rhododendron as high as the house and fourteen varieties of azaleas.

The fascinating thing was the rushing river down below us. It was the wildest water, full of the biggest boulders. I do not believe a rubber raft or a kayak or anything could have lasted forty feet in it. It was rushing with such tremendous drive down the gorge. Waterfalls! A thousand-foot waterfall! You saw so many of them you finally quit exclaiming! Just think of the Chinese scrolls that you have seen and assume to be, or at least I assumed them to be, imaginary country. It's not, it's real and there it was.

### A Passing Moment

Our darling little guide was about four feet high and she

looked like you could hold her in the palm of your hand, absolutely adorable face, excellent English. Along on this bus ride all of a sudden she said, "Would you all like to sing a song?" and we said, "We want you to sing one." So she sang in English "Edelweiss," from *The Sound of Music*. That seems to be the only American movie they are acquainted with and they like it very much. Then she sang us a Chinese folk song, very plaintive and melodious and sweet. We were hard put to come back with something—no real singers in the crowd and no unanimity about what we wanted to sing. Finally we sang "America the Beautiful."

### Politics

The Chinese speak of the past thirty-odd years as if they were the beginning of the world, in spite of having a history that goes back so many hundreds of years before Christ, so many millenia. In 1945 we, they, all together defeated the Japanese. Four years later came the end of their own civil war which had been going on even during the struggle against Japan, creating a terribly confusing situation. Chiang Kai-shek was defeated in 1949 and departed for Taiwan. That was the beginning of the People's Republic of China; and they talk as if it were the beginning of the world to them.

They also are quite forthright in labeling the bad times: the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards, the excesses of their own government, which they now attribute to the Gang of Four. As an outsider, I can only assume that Mao had grown old and senile, and the Gang of Four did indeed perpetrate a lot of wretched excesses, killing people, closing all the universities, either driving underground or imprisoning or exiling scientists, educators, all sorts of learned people. Nobody went to institutions of higher education from 1966 until, in 1977, this period came to an end. For about four years the universities have been open again; and it's like eternal spring to them in their thirst for knowledge.

Except for that one bleak decade from 1966 to 1976, there just seems an awful lot of unity, of national will, pride and cohesion, and a sense that "we are really going to charge ahead." I hope I live long enough to see the steps, the progress they make, and I very much hope it's all good.

(Photos on pages 6-7 by James L. Stanfield, National Geographic Society)



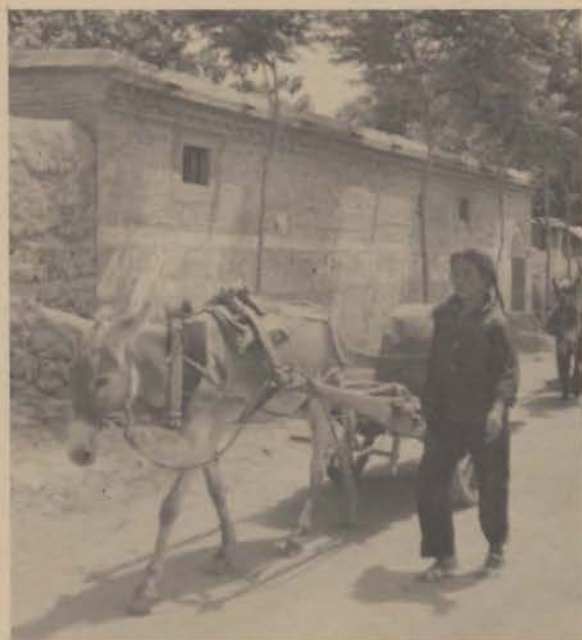
Pictures from Mrs. Johnson's camera (and captions from her pen).



Every highway, every city street, every country road is lined with trees!



Two senior citizens rest at top of 574 steps up to the Dragon Temple.



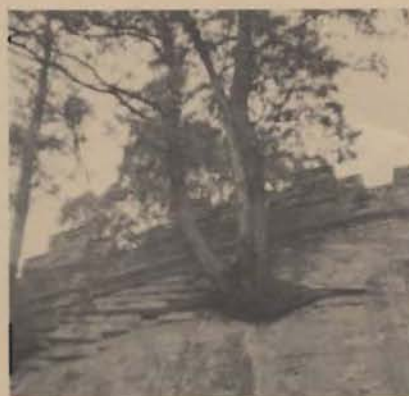
Transportation in China takes on many forms.



Three generations live together in a house, partly cave, partly mud—along with their hogs and chickens!



All ages young and old gather to harvest the wheat.



Life in China is hard and very, very persistent.