

AMONG FRIENDS *of LBJ*

Issue Number LIV February 1, 1993



Surrounded by relatives and friends (daughter Luci; granddaughters Claudia and Rebekah Nugent, with Ian Turpin between them; granddaughters Cathy and Lucinda Robb, with Stuart Turpin between them; and screen star Hugh O'Brian), Mrs. Johnson acknowledges the accolades of the audience.

Library Hosts Lady Bird's 80th Birthday

It was an exercise in nostalgia, humor and reminiscence; and underlying it all was a consideration of the influence one woman had on her time and her country. The event was Lady Bird Johnson's 80th birthday, celebrated at the LBJ Library on December 4-5

(three weeks before the actual date of December 22). Family members, friends, associates stretching deep into the past, and current fellow workers—1,000 in all—assembled to honor the former First Lady in a salute that included serious tributes, hilarious hi-

jinks, a mammoth cake, and the premiere of a new film, "Lady Bird Johnson: A Life," produced by Charles Guggenheim, to be shown regularly at the Library. The event was organized and coordinated by Liz Carpenter, with the help of a committee.

Tom Johnson, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the LBJ Foundation, delivered a birthday gift on behalf of the individual members of the Foundation Board: creation of a "Lady Bird Johnson Environmental Award," to be given periodically at the Library to a person who has made a significant contribution to the preservation of the environment. Flanking Mrs. Johnson are Library Director Harry Middleton and grandson Patrick Lyndon Nugent.



Three national leaders who worked with the First Lady during the Johnson administration recalled the contributions she made during that time. Sargent Shriver related her influence in establishing Head Start and other programs of the War on Poverty.



John Gardner spoke of her effect on the education initiatives. "But her impact was much greater than one can describe through a history of programs. . . . She lit up the whole landscape. . . . She made us all want to do a better job and be better people."



Laurance Rockefeller, who was closely allied with her in the cause most directly identified with her, called her "an important bridge from the traditional conservation movement of the early years to the environmental movement of the late 60s and beyond."



Six women who have shared important parts of Lady Bird Johnson's life read excerpts from her writings that traced some of her vivid and memorable experiences. They were college friend Cecille Marshall; Nellie Connally, with whom a friendship began when John Connally served as an aide to young Congressman Johnson; daughters Lynda Johnson Robb and Luci Baines Johnson; Lindy Boggs, who shared the life of a congressional wife; and Mary Love Bailey, whose long association was forged on the campaign trails. The eloquent and poignant excerpts from diary, letters and speeches were selected by Betty Tilson. Their reading gave a special glow to the evening. Excerpts:

Living in the country, I quickly fell in tune with the great rhythm of life. I thrilled to the crackle of lightning and the majesty of thunder. This theater of seasons is one of the most vital and renewing experiences of life.

At the University, all the doors to the world suddenly swung open to me. The university enlarged my life in every way.

[Lyndon] came on strong and was very direct and dynamic. I didn't know quite what to make of him. Before that [first] day was over he asked me to marry him. I thought he was out of his mind. I'm a slow considered person generally, certainly not given to quick conclusions or rash behavior.

Lyndon never said to me, "Some of

these days I'm going to run for congress." The first person to suggest it to me was a friend, and I just sat there with my mouth open . . . We jumped in with the zest of youth and a lot of encouragement from our friends.

I soon learned that "constituents" was a word spelled in capital letters and mighty important to a Congressman and his wife. . . . I was Lyndon's proxy in that regard.

November 22, 1963. It all began so beautifully. The streets were lined with people. Lots and lots of people—the children smiling, placards, confetti, people waving. Against that backdrop the unthinkable happened and tragedy swept Lyndon into the Presidency.

It soon became clear to me that I might play a useful role in advancing some of [Lyndon's] programs. The

White House offered the opportunity and the podium to speak out about efforts which were of particular concern to me.

For me the environment was a natural. It was and is my lasting love.

As I look back on our five years in the White House—years of turmoil and achievement, of triumph and pain—I feel amazement that it happened to me, and gratitude that I had the opportunity to live them, and strongest of all—out of all the trips I made and all the people I met—a deep roaring faith in and love for this country.

As I look back on these eighty years, I relish every day, feeling like a jug into which rich wine is being poured until it is full to the top and overflowing.



Jim Ketchum, who was White House curator in the Johnson years, Bess Abell, social secretary, and Nash Castro, liaison between the White House and the National Park Service, with humor, affection and seriousness discussed life in the White House in its many dimensions when Mrs. Johnson presided over it.



A group of reporters who covered the First Lady during those years recounted their experiences on their travels. They were Sarah McClendon, Marie Ridder, Betty Bailey, Bonnie Angelo, Frances Lewine, Liz Carpenter (who was press secretary and who moderated the discussion) Marie Smith, Isabelle Shelton, and Simone Poulain (who handled television coverage.)



Carol Channing brought glamour, excitement and show-biz to the festivities by popping out of a cake and singing "Hello Lady Bird," to the tune of "Hello Dolly"—specially written by Jerry Herman.

Sid Fly gave a tender moment with a song he wrote for the occasion, "The Dreams of a Lady."



Cactus Pryor, who MC'd the final segment of the celebration featuring gags, spoofs and surprises, appears to cause the honoree some apprehension.



No, that's not Bill Clinton, but it is Jake Pickle. Congressman Pickle and his harmonica were joined by President-elect-impersonator Keith Kelly.



A giant birthday cake, decorated with wildflowers, was cut by Mrs. Johnson with the help of Texas Governor Ann Richards. Later, the cake was served to visitors to the Library.





Liz Carpenter remembered that the lady being feted once expressed the hope of seeing a flying saucer, so Liz arranged for members of "Esther's Follies," an Austin entertainment troupe, to simulate a landing from outer space.

Bill Moyers gave the final tribute. "In a role you never sought," he said, "in a world you didn't make, in the face of changes in our country you could not anticipate, it was in your nature to be in the grimmest as well as the gayest of times a healing presence. . . . It's not the position we honor—you held no office. It's not the dogwood and daffodils and dissident places made green that we remember, delightful as they are. It is you we honor, as one at peace with herself and one that brings peace to all touched by you."



Evening Programs

Jack Valenti, who served as special assistant to President Johnson and for the past 25 years has been president of the Motion Picture Association of America, spoke at the Library on the occasion of the publication of his novel about Washington, titled *Protect and Defend*. His comments ranged over his broad experience in the worlds of government and entertainment.



Field Marshal Lord Carver traced the career of the British military leader Sir Archibald Wavell for members of the University Faculty Seminar for British Studies as well as the Friends of the LBJ Library. Betty Monkman (below), assistant curator of the White House, discussed the history and culture of the White House, commemorating the bicentennial of the cornerstone laying of that edifice.





The talented trio of Sterling Price-McKinney (at piano), Karen Kuykendall and Ray Daum (left) provided a Christmas season program entitled "Twentieth Century Song Book: A Musical Celebration."

Coming Events

February 13-April 18: An exhibition of Mexican Prints.

February 22: Richard Norton Smith, Director of the Herbert Hoover Library, will discuss George Washington, the subject of his soon to be published biography, *Patriarch*, a Book of the Month Club selection.

March 8: Another upcoming Book of the Month Club biography will be on Sam Houston. Author Marshall DeBruhl will review that historical figure's colorful life and career.

April 1: An evening with Cactus Pryor, Austin's own celebrity.

April 9-August 29: Exhibition: *Arnold Newman's Americans*

April 14: Fleur Cowles, painter and writer who has been everywhere and knows everyone, will conduct a tour through a vibrant lifetime of experiences.

May 18: Admiral Bobby Inman, former deputy chief of the CIA, will peer into the post-cold war world.

Vietnam Paintings on Exhibit

A dramatic—and somewhat unusual—exhibition is now mounted in the Library's museum. Titled, "The Vietnam War: An Artist's Perspective," it features a collection of paintings combining vivid images and actual artifacts, all related to the war.

The artist is Peter West, a member of the generation who grew to adulthood during the Vietnam era. Museum curator Gary Yarrington calls the works on display "spectacular history paintings." The exhibition will be on display until February 28.



The artist, Peter West, here talking with visitors at the exhibition opening in the Library, said he hoped his paintings will "evoke emotional responses."



"Sight of Fire"—American eagle, the violent color of battle (the color in the actual painting is vivid red) and broken spears.



"North of DMZ"—monumental Buddha icon combined with religious images from Southeast Asian currency. Superimposed over it all: a portrait of Ho Chi Minh.

Research Grants Awarded to Thirteen Scholars



Considering the applications for grants-in-aid are Tina Houston, Library Supervisory Archivist; Bruce Buchanan, UT Government Department; Richard Schott, LBJ School; Charles Corkran, Assistant Library Director; Larry Reed, LBJ Foundation Assistant Director; Lewis Gould, UT History Department; Library Director Harry Middleton; and Library Archivist David Humphrey.

LBJ Foundation grants-in-aid to scholars doing research at the Library are now made twice a year—in the fall and spring—instead of once as has been the practice.

Thirteen recipients were selected for the first half of the 92/93 grant period. The funds, which total \$25,000, result from a grant from the Moody Foundation to provide travel and living expenses to students, teachers, and writers, enabling them to use the Library's resources.

Those receiving grants-in-aid and the titles of their proposed subjects are: Alba Alexander, "Playing Fair: The Political Boundaries of American Tax

Reform, 1942-1986"; Nancy Beck, "Wright Patman & the Politics of Compromise: A Study in Congressional Leadership"; Kai Bird, "The Bundys: A Biography of William & McGeorge Bundy and their father, Harvey Bundy"; John Clearwater, "Birth of Strategic Arms Control in the Johnson Administration, 1964-1968"; Thomas Graham, "The China Lobby, 1945-72: A Study in American Political Power"; Diane Kunz, "The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations During the 1960s"; W. Dale Mason, "Federal Indian Policy During the Johnson Years—An Era of Transition"; Robert

J. McMahon, "Toward Disillusionment & Disengagement in South Asia: The U.S., India, and Pakistan, 1963-1969"; Xiao Qian, "Lyndon B. Johnson and Sino-American Relations—The American Policy Toward China in Johnson's Time"; Charles Rieper, "The Consequences of the Vietnam War for American Diplomacy & Foreign Economic Policy"; Michal Skappa, "Eastern Europe and the USA: USA and CSFR During the Johnson Administration"; Mark Young, "Lyndon Johnson and the Democratic Party, 1949-1961"; James A. Bill, "George Ball and U.S. Foreign Policy."

AMONG FRIENDS OF LBJ is a publication of the Friends of the LBJ Library

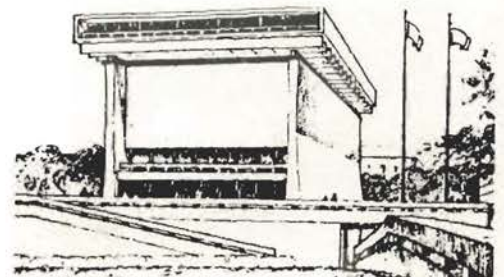
Editor: Lawrence D. Reed

Research Assistance: Charles Corkran, Gary Yarrington

Photography: Frank Wolfe, Margaret Harman, Ave Bonar

Staff Assistance: Yolanda Boozer

The LBJ Library is one of nine presidential libraries administered by the National Archives and Records Administration.



LBJ Birthday Observed

Lady Bird's 80th was not the only birthday observed during the period of this report. President Johnson's (it would have been his 84th) was commemorated, as traditionally, at the LBJ grove in Washington, D.C., where Jim Jones was speaker (right), and at the LBJ Ranch cemetery (below), where George Christian officiated.



At the Library, LBJ's birthday was marked by a rally held in front of the building by the Democratic candidates, Governor Bill Clinton and Senator Al Gore.

