

A black and white photograph of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum. The building is a large, modern structure with a prominent white facade and a series of rectangular windows. In the foreground, there is a large, paved plaza with a grid pattern of light and dark squares. Several people are walking on the plaza. To the left, there are two flagpoles; the one in the foreground has an American flag flying. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a cloudy sky.

The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library & Museum

A Progress Report

THE LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

"I hope that visitors who come here will achieve a closer understanding of the office of the Presidency, which affects their own lives so greatly. I hope that those who shared in the history of this time will remember it and see it in perspective, and that the young people who come here will get a clearer comprehension of what this Nation tried to do in an eventful period of its history."

Lyndon B. Johnson

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Produced by the
Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation

What Is a Presidential Library?

Most of the half million people who come here each year spend their visits viewing the Museum exhibits and displays. The "library" aspect of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum may not be readily apparent—books, after all, comprise but a small part of our holdings. A presidential library is primarily an archive, a depository for personal papers and federal records.

The records of the first thirty presidents are scattered: some are in the Library of Congress; some are in various state libraries, universities, and historical societies; others have been destroyed or lost.

All that began to change in 1939 when Franklin Roosevelt set aside a building for his presidential papers, which he then turned over to the government with the agreement that it would maintain the library and make the papers available for research. The Presidential Libraries Act of 1955 formalized this arrangement by authorizing the federal government to enter into the same arrangement with all living former presidents, the current incumbent, and all future chief executives.

Consequently, there now exist libraries bearing the names of Presidents Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Ford. Planning is underway for the Carter Library in Georgia. The site for a Nixon Library has not, at this stage, been determined. The building and grounds for the Johnson Library, the first to be located on a university campus, were donated by the Uni-



Harry Middleton

versity of Texas and are operated by the National Archives of the General Services Administration.

This publication provides a brief history of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum and the programs and activities that have grown up around it, from its conception early in the Johnson administration through the recent expansion and renovations.

—Harry J. Middleton, Director

Text following by Chris Gray.
Photographs from Johnson
Library archives and by Library
staff photographers.

A Different Spirit



It is a mother lode of history—a vast archive to be mined for years to come; it is a national forum for the free exchange of ideas; it is a splendid museum—the visual record of a tumultuous era. An extraordinary range of activities flourishes within the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum.

Scholars, students, teachers, writers, and journalists from across the United States and many foreign countries come here each year to do research. In addition, half a million people view the Museum exhibits annually, making the Library a state tourist attraction second only to the Alamo in popularity. Thousands more have attended Library symposia led by some of our most challenging contemporary thinkers.

This is no gray and lifeless archival repository. It was never meant to be.

Lady Bird Johnson, who has played such an important part in the development of this institution, recorded her impression of the presidential papers held in the various archives she visited during the planning stages of this library: “. . . gray, anonymous, box after box, identically bound, hidden from the world on shelves behind locked doors . . .” The dramatic display of documents overlooking the Great Hall of the LBJ Library and Museum—four stories of red buckram boxes, each bearing a gold presidential seal—embodies a different spirit.

Thousands of document boxes
overlook the Great Hall.

Many Hands

Many hands have shaped the LBJ Library. First, of course, was President Johnson. It was his vision of this institution and its possibilities that set the tone from the beginning. The echoes of the 1965 inaugural ceremony had hardly died away when he designated Mrs. Johnson his chief agent in the arduous task of planning and building a presidential library.

The first step was to choose a site. The University of Texas at Austin had initially requested the Johnson papers in the mid-50s when the president was Senate majority leader. In 1965 the request was vigorously renewed by U.T. Board of Regents Chairman W. W. Heath. Along with Chancellor Harry Ransom and Regent Frank C. Erwin, Jr., Heath lobbied President Johnson in Washington and at home on the LBJ Ranch to make his the first presidential library to be built on a university campus and to make that campus the University of Texas.



(above) W. W. Heath meets with President Johnson in the White House.



(far left) The Johnsons tour the Library site during construction.



(left) Frank C. Erwin, Jr., Mrs. Johnson, and President Johnson discuss an architectural model during the early stages of planning.

(right) The Johnson Library under construction.

(below) It was determined that a large urban campus such as The University of Texas at Austin would provide the best setting for the Johnson Library and School of Public Affairs.



The president's alma mater, Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, which had formally requested the Johnson papers in 1962 when he was vice president, was also seriously considered as a site. And both campuses competed with the sentimental attraction of President Johnson's boyhood home Johnson City as a location for his library.

But it soon became apparent that the vital, multi-faceted institution that the president sought to build—a place where “scholars can study the past for the sake of the future,” as he once put it—could best flourish on an accessible, urban campus such as the University of Texas. When, in February, 1965, the Regents proposed that President Johnson deposit his papers in a building they would provide on campus and that a graduate school of public affairs be created in conjunction with the library, the decision was sealed.

Heath, who referred to the Johnson Library as “the greatest single acquisition of the University of Texas,” was instrumental in the president's final decision. He was also intimately involved in the planning and building of the Library and accompanied Mrs. Johnson on many of her research trips.

“At Lyndon's urging,” Mrs. Johnson wrote, “I spent the next two years taking a cram course on what the proposed building could and should be.” She began by visiting the four then-existing presidential libraries and the ancestral homes of a dozen presidents and inspecting the work of architects around the country.

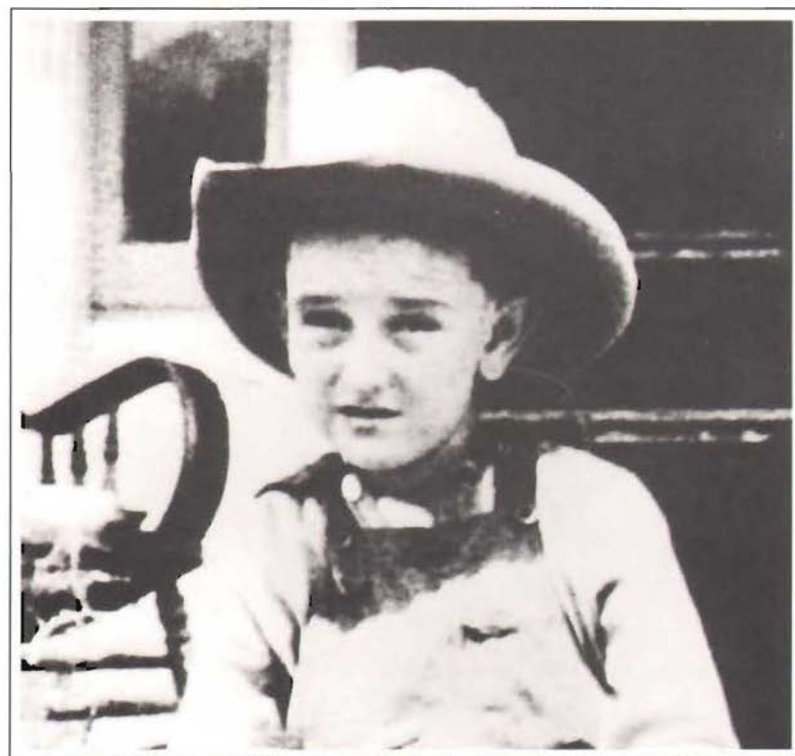
A Melding of Library and Museum

Mrs. Johnson began to see how a presidential library might dramatically portray the decisions of a president and his effect upon his times. The archives and displays should represent a melding—"a melding of both library and museum," she wrote in her *White House Diary*, "from which they would both profit and both become more alive . . . I want to use every artistry of architects and archivists and staff and family who have loved and saved things through the years to make ours tell the story of our period of time."

Lyndon Johnson's staff began saving things for him the day he first filed for Congress, and in 1958 as Senate majority leader he hired an official archivist. But the case has been made that the Johnson collection really began the day he was born. Lyndon's young life was carefully recorded by his remarkable mother Rebekah Baines Johnson in journals, scrapbooks, and photographs. One archivist observed, "It's as if she knew from the moment he was born that he was going to be president!" Certainly this library is the richer for it.

Among the 31 million documents housed here are records, both official and personal, of Lyndon Johnson's boyhood days and his career as a schoolteacher, as aide to a congressman, as a congressman, and as a senator. There is a grade-school report card (all A's except for the C he received in deportment) and there is the note of support that Mrs. Johnson slipped to him as the 1964 National Democratic Convention opened: "to step out now would be wrong for your country." There are miles of motion picture film, thousands of yards of audio tape, and half a million still photos.

The Museum collection contains 35,000 historical items. Exhibits draw on the best of the





collection to convey in a visual way the essence of Lyndon Johnson's life and forty-year public career. Mrs. Johnson was particularly intent on communicating the personal side of White House life through the Museum displays where "Visitors want to see first-hand the real belongings that were part of the center of power."

Exhibit designers made use of the latest in audio-visual techniques in the effort to make a tour of the Johnson Library and Museum as much as possible like a conversation with the president. (Indeed a number of delighted visitors did encounter among the exhibits President Johnson himself, who used a small office off the eighth floor Oval Office replica as actual working quarters before his death in 1973).

Architect Gordon Bunshaft also aimed to communicate the personality of the man Lyndon Johnson in the challenging and contemporary building he designed. "I thought the president was a really virile man," Bunshaft commented, "a strong man with nothing sweet or sentimental or small about him . . . I think this building is kind of powerful, and he's kind of a powerful guy. There's nothing delicate about him."



(top, far left) President Johnson views the installation of the metal mural overlooking the Great Hall. Shown is the panel depicting Franklin Roosevelt with Congressman Lyndon Johnson.

(top) The Oval Office replica is one of the Library's most popular exhibits.

(bottom, far left) A snapshot from *A Family Album* portrays the young Lyndon Johnson.

(bottom) The exhibit on political memorabilia has been a perennial favorite with Museum visitors.

Dedication Day

"It is all here; the story of our time—with the bark off," declared President Johnson in his dedication speech. "There is no record of a mistake, nothing critical, ugly or unpleasant that is not included in the files here. We have papers from my forty years in public service in one place for friend and foe to judge, to approve or disapprove This library will show the facts, not just the joy and triumphs, but the sorrow and failures, too."

Ground was broken for the Library in fall of 1967, and the Johnsons visited the job site often during the construction phase. The work continued virtually up to the last minute, but by dedication day, May 22, 1971, all was in place. The imposing, eight-story structure of travertine marble rose on a green knoll overlooking the campus. Set off by sculptural live oaks and gracious fountains, the Library connects via a wide plaza with Sid Richardson Hall, which houses the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

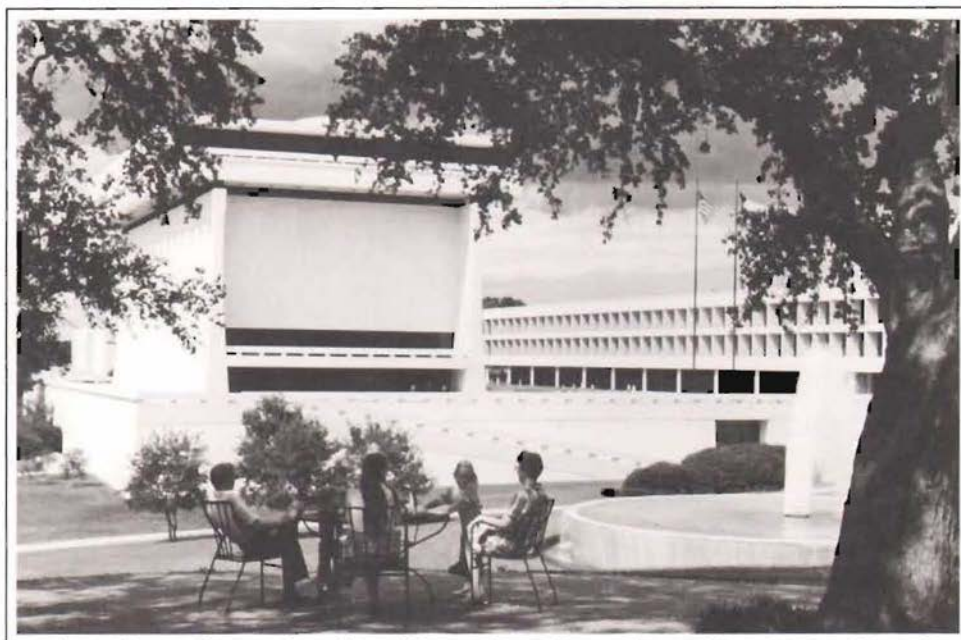
The dedication was celebrated with a flair appropriate to the 36th president of the United States. Four thousand guests descended on Austin from around the world. There were writers, business leaders, foreign dignitaries, educators, entertainers, and Hill Country neighbors. Among them were representatives of the American political scene from the New Deal to the Nixon Administration.

In a nationally televised ceremony the University of Texas, which built and continues to own the Library, turned it over to the federal government to operate. The nation had a new presidential library, containing the largest and most complete presidential collection assembled to that time.



(left) President Johnson delivers his dedication speech.

(below) The eight-story Johnson Library connects via a wide plaza with the LBJ School of Public Affairs. The complex is set on a green knoll overlooking the campus of The University of Texas.



A Procession of History



A World War I doughboy's uniform was part of the exhibit "The War to End All Wars."



(above) Visitors take a close look at the Magna Carta, an exhibit that attracted record crowds.

(bottom, left) The lifestyle of a century ago was portrayed in "U.S.A., the 1880s."

(bottom, right) Sports memorabilia were not overlooked in the special exhibit "The 1920s, the Decade That Roared."



In addition to the permanent exhibits, the Museum hosts a fascinating procession of traveling and special exhibits each year. The scores of traveling exhibits have brought some of the world's greatest art and most important historical documents to the Museum: paintings by John Singer Sargent, Thomas Eakins, and Winslow Homer; sculpture by Jean Antoine Houdon, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Henry Moore; documents including the Magna Carta, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Cornwallis' letter of surrender to George Washington.

The special exhibits mounted by the Museum itself are sponsored by the Friends of the LBJ Library. These major exhibitions are on view for a minimum of six months and are complemented by related public lectures and other special events. The Museum staff brought together historical objects from across the country to create special exhibits on World War I, "The War to End All Wars;" "The 1920s, the Decade that Roared;" and "U.S.A.: the 1880s."

The Archives—Research

The Johnson presidential papers include interagency and staff memoranda and reports, cabinet studies, notes on telephone calls and meetings, task force reports, daily diaries, and correspondence. These papers contain the resources for countless articles, books, and dissertations. It is the mission of the Library's archivists to "open" the papers, a process that involves arrangement and review of each document. In accordance with President Johnson's deed of gift, papers which might embarrass or harass living persons are not to be made available. While the majority of the Johnson presidential materials have been reviewed, only about one percent of this material has been closed.

The one million security classified papers among the Library's holdings are another matter. Because they must undergo the cumbersome process of declassification by various federal agencies, only a small percentage of these documents have been made available for study. It could be as long as thirty years before the "secret" stamp is removed from the bulk of these papers. Still, a researcher can request mandatory review for possible declassification of a specific document if it has been classified for ten or more years.

The documents covering President Johnson's life and career have received first priority in the review process: first the presidential, then the congressional, senatorial, and vice presidential papers. The first papers opened for research were the presidential papers on civil rights and education.

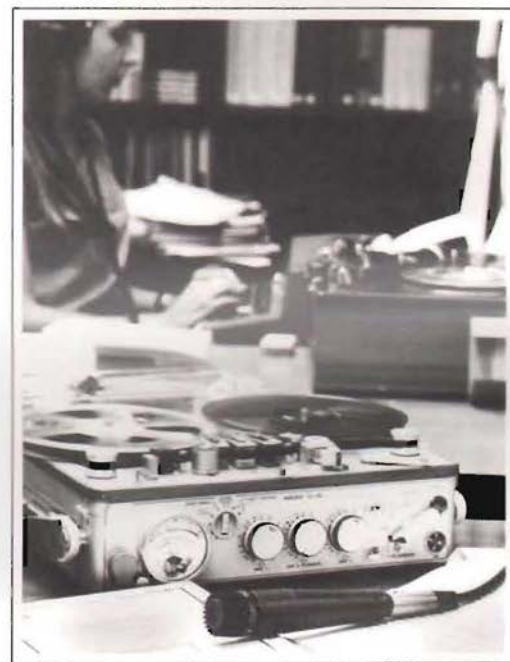
Besides the presidential material there are some ten million papers of government agencies and advisory boards as well as the personal papers of people associated with the president during his public life. Included are



(above left) Researchers work in the reading room.

(above right) Archivists fill numerous document requests for researchers each day.

(right) The recollections of people who knew Lyndon Johnson are taperecorded and transcribed for the Oral History Project.



Opportunities Unlimited



Procedure for Researchers

The first step for a researcher who wishes to use the collections of the Johnson Library is to contact the Library by phone (512-482-5137) or by mail (Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, 2313 Red River Street, Austin, Texas, 78705) and inform the supervisory archivist of the research topic. The researcher will then receive by mail or phone information on materials available at the Library on that topic.

At the Library, the archivist most familiar with the topic conducts an orientation interview with the researcher to explain Library procedures and discuss sources to explore. The archivist also introduces the researcher to the reading room facilities and finding aids. An archivist is always on duty in the reading room to answer researchers' questions.

the papers of such figures as Drew Pearson, Ramsey Clark, John Gardner, Dean Rusk, and Wright Patman. Such documents add a unique breadth to the research opportunities here, and new papers are acquired each year.

The donation in 1979 of the D. B. Hardeman Collection, 6,000 volumes on the history of the United States Congress and American politics, provides the Library with an extensive and valuable record. In conjunction with the collection, the \$1,500 D. B. Hardeman Award is presented biennially for the best book on the history and workings of Congress.

Another invaluable research resource is the Lyndon B. Johnson Oral History Project. The recollections of Lyndon Johnson's cabinet members, political opponents, and boyhood friends add warmth and personal detail to the documentary record. The Project was conducted by the University of Texas until 1974 when it was turned over to the Library. To this point, interviews have been taped with some 900 individuals who were involved with Lyndon Johnson's life and career.

Since 1974, fifteen to twenty scholars annually have received grants-in-aid to pursue research at the Johnson Library. The program is made possible by a grant from the Moody Foundation of Galveston through the Lyndon B. Johnson Foundation. As another means to facilitate research, the L.B.J. Foundation is sponsoring, with the help of the Rockwell Fund of Houston, the publication of a bibliography on Lyndon Johnson.

The Audiovisual and Photographic Archives

The visual documentation of the Johnson years is an invaluable part of the LBJ Library collection. The audiovisual and photographic archives are comprised of more than 1,000 historic films, 8,000 audio tapes, 4,000 hours of video tape, 100,000 still photos, and 400,000 negatives.

One of the major audiovisual holdings is the documentary motion picture record, month by month, of White House activities from summer of 1966 to January 1969. There are also 800 original tapes of Lyndon Johnson's statements and speeches as president. Included are video tapes of network coverage of major addresses and press conferences. Researchers use specially equipped carrels to view requested tapes and films.

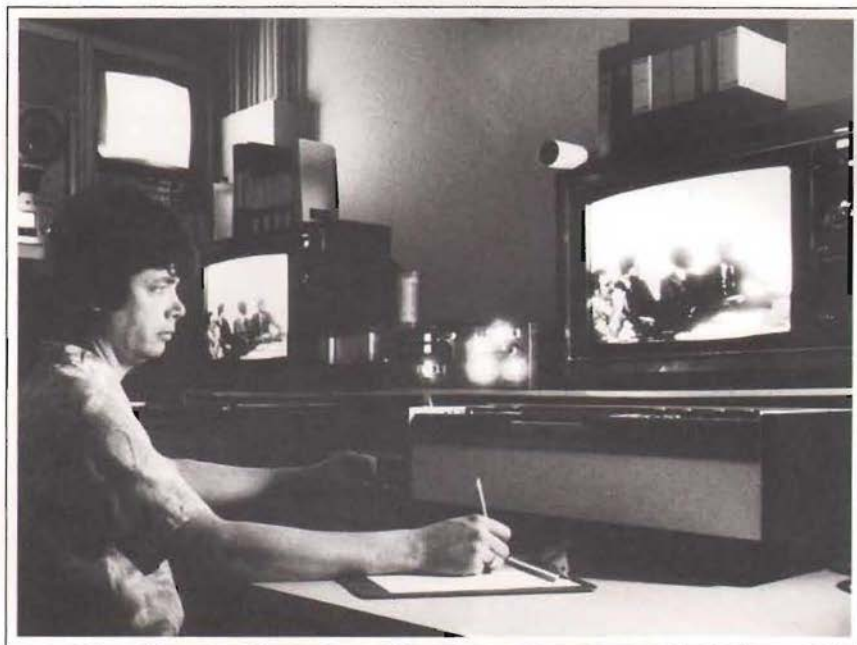
The huge still photo collection, which includes all the photographs taken by White House photographers during the Johnson administration as well as pre- and post-presidential material, is also open to researchers. Each week the Library responds to numerous requests for prints from scholars, publishers, the media, and the public.

The Library's Technical Services Division is responsible for reproducing audio and video tapes and still photographs for reference, for the preservation of audiovisual materials, for providing technical assistance to researchers, and for maintaining the Museum's audiovisual exhibits.

(above) Video tape is edited in the Technical Services Division lab.

(right) Slides, being identified at the light table, are part of the audiovisual archives.

(far right) A Library staff photographer records a special exhibit on film.



With the Help of Friends

(right) Helen Hayes and Mrs. Johnson share the stage at the Tribute gala.

(bottom) A volunteer docent guides school children through the exhibits.

(below) Mrs. Johnson makes a point at a meeting of the LBJ Foundation board of directors.



A number of Library and Museum activities not funded by the federal government are supported by the LBJ Foundation through the organization Friends of the LBJ Library.

One of the first projects made possible by the Friends was the production of a fullscale documentary film on Lyndon Johnson's life and career. Premiered in Austin May 22, 1974, the fifty-minute documentary represents the distillation of some twenty-eight hours of choice film as well as hundreds of research hours. "The Journey of Lyndon Johnson" is screened frequently at the Museum and is available upon request to school groups and organizations. "The First Lady: A Portrait of Lady Bird Johnson," a half-hour film completed in 1981, is shown daily in the First Lady Theater on the second floor of the Museum.

"A National Tribute to Lady Bird Johnson" held at the Library December 11, 1977, culminated a drive to establish a permanent endowment for the Friends. The response from Texas and across the country was so great that the original goal was doubled and promptly met.

Without the help of the Foundation or the Friends, the Library could not remain, as President Johnson wished, the only presidential library with free admission. The Friends sponsor the symposia series, distinguished speakers, the Oral History Project, the publication program, grants-in-aid to scholars, guided tours, and a continual flow of special exhibits.

A National Forum

It was at the symposium "Equal Opportunity in the United States," held at the Library in December 1972, that President Johnson made his last public appearance. Here he made his final appeal in the cause which involved him so deeply: "It's time to leave aside the legalisms and euphemisms and eloquent evasions. It's time we get down to the business of standing Black and White on equal ground."

Civil rights is one of a number of the great issues of our time that have been explored through the LBJ Library Symposia Series. The Series, sponsored jointly by the Library and the University of Texas, has served as a national forum for the exchange of ideas on topics including education, energy, urban affairs, the status of women, the arts, the press, and the outlook for the 1980s. Seminar participants have included policymakers, philosophers, scientists, journalists, and artists of international renown. A number of symposia have been published in book form in cooperation with the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

The Distinguished Lecturers Series, established in 1971 with a grant from the Moody Foundation, also brings prominent speakers to the Library each year. The Series was inaugurated with an address by British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and subsequent speakers have included Averell Harriman, Elliot Richardson, Sam Ervin, Dean Rusk, Henry Kissinger, Clark Clifford, and Wilbur Cohen.

Both the symposia and the lectures are free to the public, and thousands have attended.



(above) Barbara Jordan and Vernon Jordan confer with President Johnson at the symposium on civil rights, "Equal Opportunity in the United States."



(left) Walter Cronkite was one of the participants in the symposium, "The International Challenge of the 1980s."



Such lecturers and symposia participants as Henry Kissinger, Beverly Sills, Dean Rusk, Gloria Steinem, Buckminster Fuller, and Hubert Humphrey regularly fill the Johnson Library auditorium to overflowing.



A New Chapter

From the beginning, this institution has operated in a spirit of growth and change which has made it a unique asset in Texas and in the nation. More than ten years and six million visitors after the opening of the Johnson Library, came the time for a reevaluation. A decade of sifting the documents and museum collections, of grappling with great issues through the symposia series, of receiving the public and serving scholarly researchers has lent perspective and made possible a sharper focus. The new and expanded exhibits opened in summer 1982 reflect a new depth of experience and present a more finely textured image of the man Lyndon Johnson and his times.

Sponsored jointly by the University of Texas and the LBJ Foundation, the renovations greatly expanded space for conferences, added an orientation theater, and doubled the amount of exhibit space. The new exhibits skillfully, often movingly, tell the story of Lyndon Johnson with the help of objects, documents, photographs, and film from Library collections. An introductory slide presentation in the new orientation theater is the visitor's first stop and establishes a background which makes the exhibits more meaningful.

The tour begins with a view of Lyndon Johnson's early years: his Texas Hill Country heritage, the beginnings of his political career, his marriage to Lady Bird. In exhibits on the Senate years we see the development of the most effective legislator of the twentieth century. Lyndon Johnson's art of personal persuasion and his mastery of the parliamentary system are illustrated through the written words and the voices of people who knew and worked with him.



(top) Museum staff members add the finishing touches to a display.



(right) The new exhibit on Vietnam shows the visitor the documents the president saw when he made his critical decisions.



(top) Guests at the opening of the new exhibits view the painting "Thirteen Americans" by Alfred Leslie.



(left) A visitor takes a close look at a display on Lady Bird Johnson.

It is possible to depict only the high points in the outpouring of legislation that represents the Great Society. Concentrating on civil rights, education, health, the War on Poverty, and conservation, displays show how these programs actually touched the lives of millions of Americans.

We see Lady Bird Johnson as a woman who found herself center stage in history and took advantage of that situation to make her own contribution to national life. An assessment of the impact of her efforts on behalf of conservation and beautification reveals an enduring effect not only on the face of the nation, but on the attitude of Americans.

Exhibits on foreign affairs view the Johnson foreign policy as a whole and focus in on the Vietnam War in an attempt to capture that experience as it unfolded to the president. We also view the Six Day War "when the peace of the world walked on a tightrope" through the eyes of the chief executive.

Lyndon Johnson was a major force behind this nation's Space Program beginning in 1958 with his chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Aeronautical and Space Sciences. Displays track his involvement from the shock of Sputnik I through the American successes of the 1960s.

Upon the opening of the expanded exhibits, Mrs. Johnson borrowed from President Johnson's inaugural address to describe the process of "... becoming, trying, probing, falling, resting, and trying again—but always trying and gaining," which has guided the development of the Library. "No contemporary library or museum can remain static," she said. "So tonight we set our pen to a new chapter."

The Lyndon Baines Johnson
Library and Museum
2313 Red River Street
Austin, Texas 78705

Phone: (512) 482-5137

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily
Admission free