

THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION HISTORICAL GAZETTE

DOCENTS OF THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

AUSTIN, TEXAS

2008

Abner Cook Wins Bid to Build a Mansion for the Texas Governor

September 1854. Master builder Abner Cook was low bidder at \$14,500 and has won the contract to build a home for the Texas governor.

The Texas Legislature earlier authorized \$17,000 for the project - \$14,500 for the house and \$2,500 for furnishings.

The architect for the home is Richard Payne. Payne's original plans were too expensive and only after considerable alteration has it been possible to find a contractor who would build the home for \$14,500.

Cook plans to build the exterior walls using buff-colored bricks produced from clay at the nearby Colorado River. Framing and flooring will be cut from pine trees near Bastrop.

Governor Holds Open House at the New Mansion

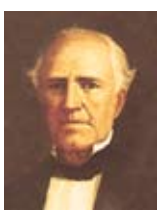
August 24, 1856. Last evening Governor Elisha Pease held an open house at the newly completed Governor's Mansion. Mrs. Pease was not in attendance and when asked about her whereabouts, the governor said that she was visiting relatives in Connecticut. He admitted that the citizens of Austin were seeing Mrs. Pease's new home before she did.

Governor Pease was obviously pleased with the mansion. He guided the citizens of Austin through it much as any other proud owner would. Over 500 people toured the new mansion. Governor Pease invited his visitors to stay for supper and over 300 did so.

Four neighbor ladies arrived on Saturday morning to prepare a "Gay & Brilliant Affair." Pigs, chickens, turkeys, salads, cakes and preserves were served. The governor said, "The table was the finest I ever saw set in Austin." It was well after midnight before the last guest departed.

Governor Sam Houston Resigns

March 3, 1861. Governor Sam Houston has resigned as governor of the State of Texas.



Announcing his resignation, Governor Houston said that he was remaining true to his strong belief in maintaining the Union.

Since serving as United States senator, Sam Houston has consistently maintained

that it is important to the State of Texas that it remains in the Union. He told the press that his views on the critical situation were in conflict with the majority views of the citizens of Texas and, therefore, the citizens would best be served by another governor.

Mrs. Houston also revealed that the governor's Texas supporters and even President Lincoln offered to help him remain in office by use of force if necessary. Mrs. Houston believes that the Governor burned Lincoln's letter in the Library fireplace.

Governor Houston knew that the end was near when, on Tuesday, the Secession Convention decreed that all state officials must sign an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy.

Last evening, family friends helped the Houstons pack. Mrs. Houston confided to them that it was particularly hurtful to hear people ridiculing her husband when the same people earlier had praised him as the "Hero of San Jacinto."

Facts About Texas Governors

- 40 governors have lived in the mansion
- Average age at election: 47
- Oldest: Sam Houston, age 66
- Youngest: Dan Moody, age 33
- Only 19 governors have been native-born Texans
- 28 governors have been lawyers
- 20 governors served in the Texas Legislature before their election as governor

Kids Will Be Kids

March 15, 1894. Governor Hogg admitted today that his children, being typical adventurous youngsters, have been unable to resist sliding down the banister of the staircase in the mansion. A recent fall by Tom prompted the governor to put an end to such pranks by hammering nails into the banister.

O'Daniel Celebrates Inauguration Texas Style

January 16, 1941. Today Wilbert Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel took the oath of office as governor of Texas for his second term. He is the first Texas gubernatorial candidate to poll 1,000,000 votes.

A "man of the people," Governor O'Daniel campaigned on a platform endorsing the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments. Over 60,000 attended his first inauguration which was held in U.T.'s Memorial Stadium. A barbeque was held to celebrate the beginning of his second term. Pits were dug on the mansion grounds to cook 19,000 pounds of meat, including a buffalo shot by the governor. An estimated crowd of 20,000 consumed 1,000 pounds of potato salad, 3,500 loaves of bread and 32,000 cups of coffee.

The governor's band played for the crowd.

The musicians, known previously as the Light Crust Doughboys, became the Hillbilly Boys in 1938 when

O'Daniel became president of Hillbilly Flour. Governor O'Daniel will continue his popular radio show with the band while he is governor. They broadcast on Sundays from the back parlor of the mansion.



Mansion Tradition

The first meal that each governor and his or her family take at the mansion is the midday meal on inauguration day. The outgoing governor has this meal prepared and left to welcome the new family into the mansion.

Texans Proud of Refurbished Mansion

April 14, 1982. The Governor's Mansion reopened to the public today, furnished in the elegant style in keeping with its stately Greek Revival architecture.

When Governor and Mrs. William Clements moved into the mansion, they found it structurally unsound and shabbily furnished. At Governor Clements' urging, the state legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 for renovation work. Mrs. Clements helped form Friends of the Governor's Mansion to raise additional funds for furnishings and interior decoration. The \$3,000,000 raised was used to restore historic state-owned pieces such as the Sam Houston bed and Stephen F. Austin's desk and to purchase 19th century museum-quality antiques. Texans can be proud of their beautifully restored Governor's Mansion.

The public rooms of the mansion will now remain the same throughout each new administration. First families may decorate the private quarters to accommodate their needs.

UPDATE: Perry Family Moves into Mansion

February 16, 2001. Governor Rick Perry and his family have moved into the mansion since the Bushes departed for Washington and the White House. George W. Bush resigned as governor on December 21, 2000, upon becoming President-elect of the United States. Rick Perry was sworn in as governor later that same day. He and his wife, Anita, have two children. Governor Perry is the 40th governor to reside in the mansion.

MANSION FIRSTS

SOCIAL EVENT – 1856 Levee to celebrate completion of mansion during Gov. Pease's administration.

CHILD – 1860 Temple Lea Houston, born to Gov. and Mrs. Sam Houston on August 12.

INDOOR TOILET – c 1871 Installed during the Davis administration.

WEDDING – 1872 Mary Hall, Gov. Davis' niece, married George Sampson on January 31st.

GAS LIGHTS – 1875 Installed during the Coke administration. Kerosene lamps and candles had been used to provide illumination.

RUNNING WATER – 1882 Installed during Gov. Roberts' administration.

TELEPHONE – 1883 Installed during Gov. Ireland's administration.

NATIVE-BORN TEXAN ELECTED GOVERNOR – 1891 Gov. James S. Hogg

ELECTRICITY – c 1900 Installed during Gov. Sayers' administration.

CENTRAL HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING – 1952 Installed during Gov. Shivers administration.

TELEVISION SET – 1954 Installed during Gov. Shivers' administration.

Mansion Not Always White

October 13, 1999. In 1856 the Greek Revival style Governor's Mansion was constructed with brick made from tan clay dug from the banks of the nearby Colorado River. The columns, porch railings, and wide wooden cornice at the roofline were constructed of pine cut from the "Lost Pine" forest about 30 miles downriver in Bastrop. An 1864 photograph suggests that these wooden elements were painted white or off-white.

An 1886 photo shows the brick painted to provide a seal from moisture. The photograph dated 1890 (above) shows the wooden elements painted various colors. Because there

was no color photography, there was no way to determine what colors were used.

This year, an exterior finish study has helped solve the mystery. By taking tiny samples of paint and placing them under a microscope, an expert has determined that there have been as many as twelve layers of paint to the present day. Colors used at various times include red-browns, grays, and dark greens. Even a pale blue was used on the brick.



From 1912 to the present, the house has been various shades of white or off-white with green shutters.



TEXAS GOVERNOR'S MANSION RESTORATION FUND



★
Restore a Texas Treasure

Historic Texas Governor's Mansion Burns, Arson Suspected

June 8, 2008. Statement by Gov. Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry regarding the fire at the Texas Governor's Mansion:
"We are heartbroken by the fire that has ravaged the Texas Governor's Mansion. It has not only been our home for the past eight years, but has stood as a symbol of Texas pride throughout its history. Though it can certainly be rebuilt, what Texas has lost today can never be replaced."

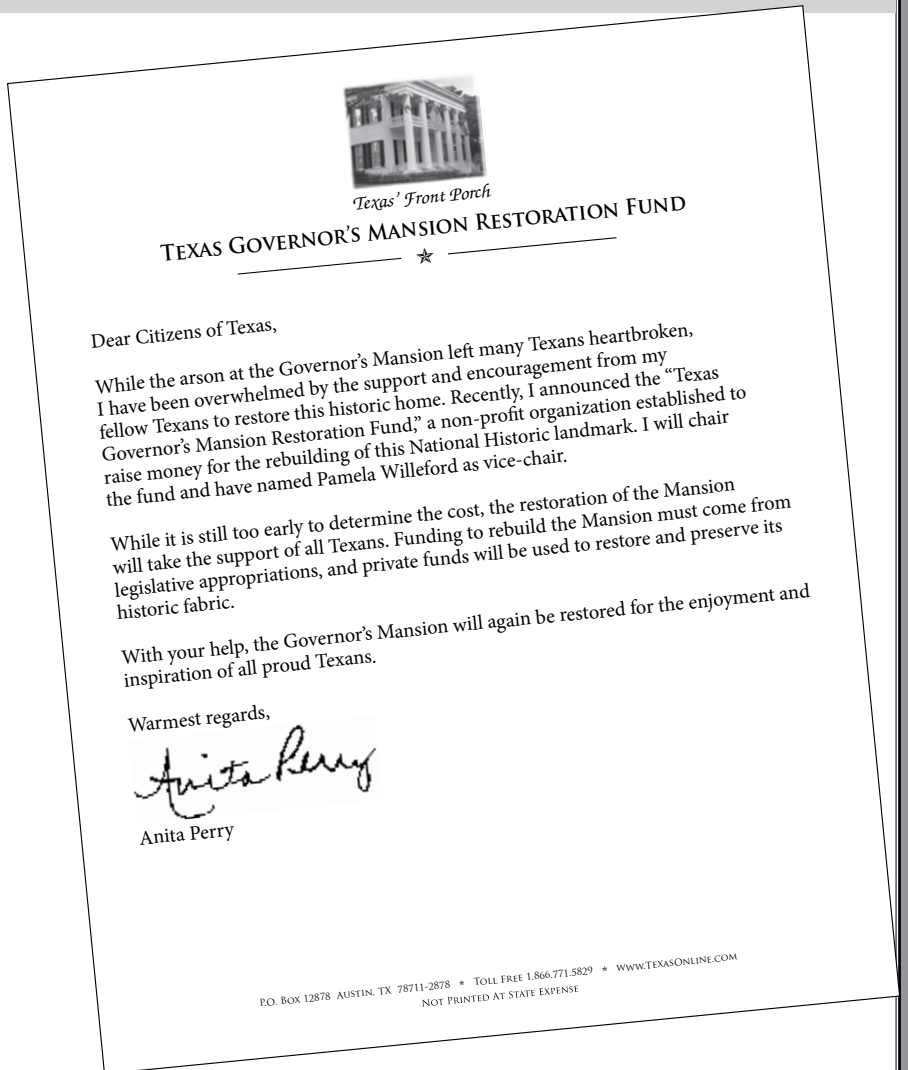
Governor Perry Vows to Rebuild Texas Governor's Mansion

June 11, 2008. Gov. Rick Perry vowed that the fire-scorched Texas Governor's Mansion will be completely rebuilt "whatever it costs." Gov. Perry also said he wants to know why state security measures failed to protect the 152-year-old home. His comments in front of the blackened and gutted mansion came as state and federal arson investigators continued to review grainy surveillance footage from Sunday's pre-dawn blaze.

"As long as I've been the governor ... few sights have left a deeper impression on me than the charred remains of this genuine Texas treasure," Gov. Perry said. At a morning news conference, the Governor pledged to "rebuild this magnificent structure" through a combination of legislative appropriations and private fundraising, an effort that will be spearheaded by First Lady Anita Perry. "It's still too early to estimate the magnitude of the replacement cost," said Rep. Rob Eissler, R-The Woodlands. "But certainly this is a monument to our history, a monument to the people who have lived there." Those sentiments were shared by other lawmakers.

While restoration estimates are not available, preservation architects have said museum-quality restorations of comparable historic homes have cost as much as \$20 million.

On Wednesday, Gov. Perry struggled for words as he described a series of phone calls notifying him and his wife of the blaze. "At that point in time, we did not know whether it would burn to the ground," he said. When Gov. Perry learned the fire was arson, his emotions "went from heartache to pretty [darn] mad." This was his family's home and a place where children have "slid down banisters and chased pets in the yard" for more than a century.



Governors, past and present, gathered at the Mansion. Former governors Preston Smith, Dolph Briscoe, William Clements, Mark White, Ann Richards, and Governor Rick Perry stand behind former First Lady Rita Clements, First Lady Anita Perry and former First Lady Linda Gale White.



Former Texas Governors Speak Out About Mansion

Former governor Dolph Briscoe, Jr. recently recounted one of his most cherished memories. At age nine he accompanied his parents on a visit to the Governor's Mansion as overnight guests of then Governor Ross Sterling. Spending the night in the Mansion and sleeping in Sam Houston's four poster bed inspired the statesman and rancher to fulfill his dreams and grow up to become governor.

"When I first heard about (the fire), I got a terrible feeling — just like that day in February 1983 when I got word that the Capitol was on fire," said former governor Mark White of Houston. "This is not just Texas history. It is priceless Texas history."

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