The Houston Family

August 12, 1860. Governor and Mrs. Houston’s eighth child, Temple Lea Houston, is the first baby born in that bed and in the Mansion. He is the latest addition to a mischievous troupe of siblings. Recently, five-year-old Andrew Jack- son Houston locked members of the Legislature in their chamber at the Capitol and hid the key. Threats of a whipping had no effect, but when Governor Houston threatened to have him arrested, he produced the key and the lawmakers were released. Governor Houston admitted, however, that his son had done a better job of controlling the Legislature than the governor!

Power Failure at the Mansion

March 5, 1919. Governor and Mrs. Hobby celebrated in the dark at the inaugural reception last night. Governor Hobby postponed the reception because he wanted to take care of urgent legal matters before celebrating his victory. Mrs. Hobby rescheduled the event for March 4, last night, and invited hundreds of guests for an informal celebration. At one point, the lights went out in the mansion due to a power failure. The reception guests continued to celebrate by candlelight. Apparently, the event was a huge success because Governor and Mrs. Hobby were late for the inaugural ball and the grand march didn’t begin until 11 p.m.!

Mansion Gets New Furniture

December 24, 1859. Because of the Mansion’s sparse furnishings, Governor and Mrs. Houston have purchased several beds, including a $30, seven-foot long, mahogany four-poster bed.

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
- Longest serving: Rick Perry
- 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

Presidential Visitors Welcomed to Texas

May, 1901. Texas First Lady Lena Sayers has redecorated the mansion in the latest Victorian style — adding a new parlor furniture set amid a forest of potted plants. The Sayers are to receive Texas’ first Presidential visitors, President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt. Because anger over the Civil War still runs high in Texas, Confederate veteran Governor Joseph D. Sayers and President McKinley, a former Union officer, set an example of reconciliation with a parade through downtown and an elegant dinner at the Man- sion. The First Lady remained in Austin, while the governor accompanied the presidential party to Houston. While there, President McKinley paid tribute to Mrs. An- son Jones, the wife of the last President of the Repub- lic of Texas.

Presidential Candidates Stay at Mansion

October, 1960. The Mansion has hosted numer- ous foreign dignitaries and Hollywood stars through the years, and some have had the honor of sleeping in the famous Sam Houston Bed. Recently, while campaigning for the presidency, Senator John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson, the Democratic nominees, spent the night with Governor Price Daniel and his family.

The Queen to Visit Texas

May 18, 1991. The Queen of England, Elizabeth II, will be arriving in Texas tomorrow. She will be the first British monarch to visit the state. Though her husband and her son, Prince Charles, have come before, this will be her first time. They have been touring the United States for the last week and will wrap up their trip in Texas. They are visiting Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio over the next three days. They will ar- rive in Austin tomorrow af- ternoon with a welcome ceremony on the steps of the Capitol. She will be receiving an inscribed gavel from House Speaker Bob Ball- ock, a Texas flag and a book about the history of the Capitol. She plans to address a joint session of the Texas Legislature. Later, tomorrow afternoon, she will be attending a reception hosted by Gov- ernor Ann Richards at the Governor’s mansion.
Mansion Update - Following the devastating arson in June, 2008, the 81st Texas Legislature appropriated $22 million in general revenue funds to restore the historic home. “I’d like to thank Texas Legislators and the many Texans from all walks of life who have contributed to saving the Texas Governor’s Mansion,” First Lady Anita Perry said. “We now are able to restore this state treasure, so that future generations can walk the same halls walked by Sam Houston.” To date, The Texas Governor’s Mansion Fund has raised more than $3.5 million, the State Preservation Board has selected a renowned preservation architecture firm, and the Mansion restoration is moving forward.

Private contributions to the project will not be used to supplant state dollars, but will be used for restoration of some of the important and costly historical features, new ADA and code requirements, landscaping and a time-sensitive evaluation and historical documentation. The Mansion architects have agreed to an aggressive schedule for the project.

State Preservation Board Progress - Historic Structures Report and Design Work

The Historic Structures Report (HSR) provides historic architecture research, changes to it over time, photographs that show the home at the various stages, and an overview of the historic significance of the property. The HSR includes a preservation approach suggested for restoration. This study focuses on architecture, touching only slightly on the grounds and interior décor. An invaluable tool, the HSR assists the State Preservation Board staff, Ford, Powell & Carson Architects, and the Texas Historical Commission with the decision-making process.

The Mansion has been well-documented over time. The HSR consolidates the research into a single document that is an excellent preservation and planning tool. While it may need to be updated, the relevant historic content will not change.

Dealey Herndon, State Preservation Board project manager of the Mansion restoration, has overseen important forensic research of mortar, bricks, paint, and structural density of the wood, and is preparing the design team to finalize documents.

At the conclusion of the design phase, phase one of construction began on the exterior in October. Phase two will be the Interior Project.