Governor Buys “Necessities”

January 2nd, 1860. Governor Sam Houston reports he spent $1,000 for curtains, rugs, china, kitchen utensils, carpeting and additional furniture for the governor’s mansion. In March 1859, he purchased 29 blankets, 9 mattresses, 55 pounds of feathers, lamp equipment (including plenty of kerosene), bedroom supplies (including chamber sets), and 8 spittoons. A bill for $30 was paid on December 24, 1859 for one “Superior Bed Stead, mahogany.”

Mansion Not Always White

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 20 miles downriver in Bastrop. An 1864 photograph suggests that these wooden elements were painted white or off-white. An 1868 photo shows the brick painted to provide a seal from moisture. The photograph dated 1886 (above) shows the wooden elements painted various colors. Because there was no color photography, there was no way to determine what colors were used. From 1912 to the present, the house has been various shades of white or off-white with green shutters.

“For its first 15 years, the mansion was unpainted brick,” said Kevin Koch, Assistant Project Manager with the State Preservation Board. “To make the house more inviting, Governor Sam Houston had the wooden elements painted white or off-white. An 1868 photo shows the brick painted to provide a seal from moisture. The photograph dated 1886 (above) shows the wooden elements painted various colors. Because there was no color photography, there was no way to determine what colors were used. From 1912 to the present, the house has been various shades of white or off-white with green shutters.

Mansion’s 155th Anniversary

June 9th, 2011. This date marks the 155th anniversary of Texas’ most historic home. The Governor’s Mansion has served as the official residence of Texas governors and their families since 1856. It is the oldest building in the Capitol Complex – 32 years earlier than the 1888 Capitol. The enduring legacy of the Governor’s Mansion is the juxtaposition of public and private stories. Think of the people who have visited — a pantheon of Texas power and politics! Can you imagine dinner with Sam Houston and his eight children? Tea with Governor Ann Richards and Queen Elizabeth? The Mansion was — and will again be — a bold reflection of Texas history, culture, and identity.

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 arrive in Austin tomorrow afternoon with a welcome ceremony on the steps of the Capitol. She will be receiving an inscribed gavel from House Speaker Bob Bullock, 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 Governor Ann Richards at the Governor’s mansion.
Governor's Mansion Restoration Fund (Fund) raised primary funds to restore the historical home. In addition, the Texas 81st Texas Legislature appropriated the necessary since an arsonist set fire to the Texas Governor's Mansion. September 15, 2011.

The State Preservation Board (SPB) selected a renowned preservation architecture firm, Ford, Powell & Carson as the Project Architect. White Construction Company was selected as the Construction Manager-at-Risk for the Project. For the first phase of the Governor's Mansion Exterior Restoration Project, SPB worked closely with the contractor to engage the most qualified craftsmen at the best value to the State. The construction began in the spring of 2011. The Interior Project includes a restoration of the historic spaces, new addition on the west side, kitchen renovations, a new elevator, and new code compliant restrooms, which will be handicap accessible. While the building will have improvements to mechanical, electrical and other systems, the historic rooms will return to their pre-fire appearance.

The Governor's Mansion Grounds Project includes the landscape design of the historic grounds and the perimeter fence. The Landscape Architect, TBG Partners, in collaboration with SPB, the Texas Historical Commission and Friends of the Governor's Mansion, continues to ensure balance is reached between respect for historical elements and the introduction of native plantings as well as security adjustments to the perimeter wall. Additionally, there will be a Department of Public Safety screening facility along Colorado Street. The Historic Structures Report was completed by Voit & Associates, summarizing and documenting the architectural history of the Mansion and serves as an invaluable resource and guide.

The Mansion belongs to all Texans and in 2012 this “Texas Treasure” will reopen and be fully restored to its former grandeur — preserved for generations to come.

Governor Dolph Briscoe and Family
The Jean and Price Daniel Foundation
Governor and Mrs. Rick Perry
The Dan Moody Jr. Memorial Fund and Ms. Nancy Moody
President and Mrs. George W. Bush
Cissie Shivers Ferguson
The Family of Governor Preston Smith and Robert and Jan Smith Taylor
The Clements Foundation
The Family of Governor William P. Hobby
Governor and Mrs. Mark White
Mr. Charles C. Butt, HEB
His Highness the Aga Khan
Texas Governor’s Mansion Restoration Fund Major Gifts

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The Heritage Society of Austin
Mr. and Mrs. Kathy A. Priddy
Mr. and Mrs. George A. Shutt
Marathon Oil Corporation
Anheuser-Busch Companies
The Gismon Family Foundation
State Employees Charitable Campaign
Mr. and Mrs. Helen K. Groves
Jane and John Barnhill
Nexstar Energy L.P.
The Pamela Wright Collection
Mr. and Mrs. David B. Marks
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ConocoPhillips
Mickey and Renee Long
Texas Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
GTKHE Corporation
Calpine Foundation
San Antonio Conservation Society Foundation
CenterPoint Energy, Inc.
Donna Miller Raymond
Texas Senate Ladies Club
Docents of the Governor’s Mansion
Scott & White Healthcare
Texas Motor Transportation Association
Sam Houston State University Alumni
Judy and Charles Tate
Ms. Regina J. Rogers
The King Ranch
GSL Industrial Partners L. P.
Park Citrus Historic & Preservation Society
Steve and Lynn Young
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USAA
The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation
Energy Future Holdings
Hunt Family Foundation
Valero Energy Foundation
The Zadzki Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Simmons
Alice and Erle Nye

Mandy and Air Force
Mr. and Mrs. William P. Hobby
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Burt
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Lambert
Daughters of the Republic of Texas
Ms. Joanna Cook
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Burt
Mr. Richard E. Ferrell
Mr. William E. Harris Jr.
Ms. Pamela Noble

Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau
At-Large Ramp
Daughters of the Republic of Texas
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Mr. Richard E. Ferrell
Mr. William E. Harris Jr.
Ms. Pamela Noble

Ms. Ellen Goetsch
Burnet County Historic Commission
Georgetown Heritage Society
Tarrant County Historical Society
Nueces County Historical Society
Ms. Florence Patton
Mr. Thomas E. Patrick
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Lambert

John and Dolly Barclay
Mrs. Carme Mauritz Panun
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Young
Meg and Jay Prepo
Senator and Mrs. Steve E. Ogden
Honorable and Mrs. Charlie Matthews
Mr. and Mrs. William O. Geise

Mr. and Mrs. William Donnell
Ms. Cynthia Newton Gayden
Austin Genealogical Society
U.S. Revenue Service
Mid-Houston Historical Society
Mr. Albert Ford Hauser
Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Hile
Mr. Jim Hine
The Thomas L. Whaley Family

Mr. and Mrs. Mrs. Mark Connally
Mr. and Mrs. Houston Daniel
Mr. and Mrs. William O. Geise
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Lambert

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