

# Center for Texas Studies *at* TCU

FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 9 / ISSUE 1

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Revised, Reenergized, and Ready

Mary L. Volcanwek, Ph.D.

The Center for Texas Studies passed the milestone of a dozen years of existence, which seemed to suggest that we revisit how, what, and why we do the things that we do. Therefore, while we will continue to “celebrate all that makes Texas distinctive,” we have a new mission statement and new set of goals to guide us.



**MISSION: To conduct public education about aspects and manifestations of Texas culture currently and historically.**

We will accomplish this mission by:

- Sponsoring events, courses, workshops, exhibitions, and presentations that enhance knowledge of aspects of Texas culture.
- Working with related community and state organizations to foster the study of aspects of Texas life.
- Publishing books in partnership with the TCU Press that disseminate knowledge of Texas and its most salient attributes.

Furthermore, as part of tailoring our mission, we reconstituted the Center’s Advisory Board to include:

- Vicki Vinson Cantwell, *Fort Worth, Civic Leader*
- Roberta Mathews Corbett, *Dallas, Civic Leader*
- Michael Mullins, *Dallas, Civic Leader*
- Steve Murrin, *Fort Worth, Civic Leader*
- Jerri Beth Palmer, *Fort Worth, Bass Hall*
- Michael Stevens, *Fort Worth, Farm and Ranch Healthcare*

The new Advisory Board met for the first time in October and was brimming with ideas for new projects for the Center, including working with TCU Alumni groups in various ways such as Lifelong Learning programs, excursions to TCU’s roots in Thorp Spring, and utilization of the Fort Worth Historic Stockyards to explore Texas heritage. I anticipate a number of new initiatives from this group which epitomizes creativity, commitment, and energy.

### MAJOR NEW PROJECT: A Definitive Exhibition of Texas Art

As a consequence of the “Deep in the Art of Texas” exhibition of artworks from the Bryan Museum Collection that appeared in the South Texas Museum of Art in Corpus Christi in Fall of 2014, the Center became interested in pursuing a larger, more comprehensive exhibit of Texas art. No such survey has been done since 1983, when the

Huntington Art Gallery at the University of Texas organized one. Many new materials have been discovered and new scholarship published in the subsequent two decades.

Representatives of the Center met with the director and curator of the Witte Museum in San Antonio to begin an exploration of the possibilities. Tentatively, the Center and the Witte are planning such an exhibition to open in the Fall of 2018 at the Witte. Defining the parameters of such an undertaking presents a challenge and, therefore, about two dozen art historians, scholars and collectors with an expertise in aspects of Texas art have been invited to participate in a charette to be held at the Witte in early December. Ron Tyler, retired Director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art and Michael Duty, also a former museum director, have been retained to curate and manage the show. A catalogue published jointly with the TCU Press is also anticipated. A decision as to whether or not to travel the resulting exhibition to museums in other cities around the state is pending, but hopefully that possibility will become a reality.

In other words, after a dozen years, the Center for Texas Studies at TCU is honing its mission, expanding its horizons, and assuming large new projects. We are grateful for your generous support in the past and hope for your continued involvement as we celebrate all that makes Texas distinctive. 🌵



ADDRAN  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Center for Texas Studies

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

## A New Day, A New Hope!

Gene A. Smith, Ph.D.

Amidst the terror of a world in free fall, amidst the fluctuations of a chaotic economy, and amidst the political transformations occurring around us, we can only hope that tomorrow brings the calm and serenity of a better day. Young people look into the future with trepidation, seeing uncertainty and feeling the anxiety that the unknown produces. As a teacher and a father, my job is to educate young minds and impress upon them the cyclical nature of time and history—how bad times have passed and good times will eventually emerge. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt expressed during his inaugural address, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” We cannot fear and dread so much that we become blinded by the past without seeing the possibilities of the future. Each new day brings a new hope. And through education, knowledge, and confidence we give young people the tools they need to reshape their future, and to create their own version of what will become history.

During June 2015 the Center for Texas Studies partnered with Humanities

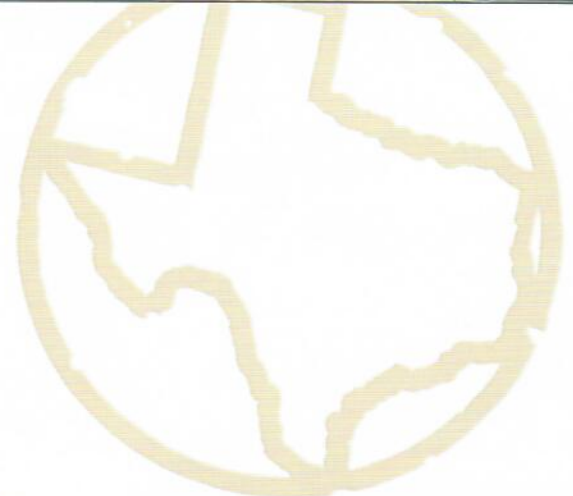
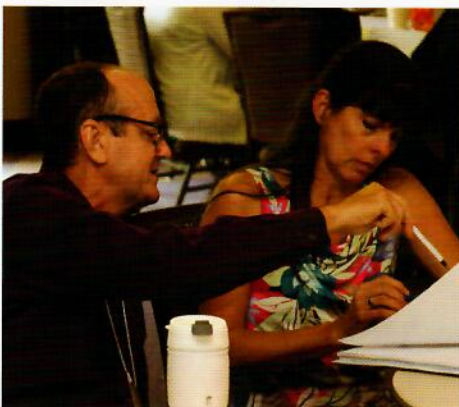


Texas to sponsor a summer teacher professional development institute entitled “From Colonists to Revolutionaries.” The institute also had sessions on Texas history during the Mexican national and revolutionary periods. Attended by 52 secondary-level social studies teachers from Texas schools, the program gave priority consideration to early-career teachers in low-performing schools and districts. It also provided teachers the opportunity for close interaction with nationally-renowned scholars, who taught teachers how to examine primary source materials and employ effective pedagogical strategies in their assignments and activities. Two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Alan Taylor of the University of Virginia delivered the institute keynote lecture, and TCU History Department faculty Gregg Cantrell, Alan Galloway, Alex Hidalgo, Bill Meier, Gene Smith, and Ken Stevens provided stimulating lectures and seminars on a range of topics. Ultimately, the four-day program enhanced teachers’ mastery of the subject they teach and this should improve students’ performance on state assessments. Better standardized scores do not necessarily portend positive future developments. Teaching young people of the cyclical nature of the past, however, should help them

realize that both bad and good times are part of their story, or their history. By having knowledge of events, by having the education to understand how to shape their present, and by having the confidence to look boldly into the future, we will be giving students the tools they need for a successful life.

As you may know, the Center for Texas Studies strives to celebrate the distinctiveness of Texas culture by sponsoring public history events, organizing teacher workshops, collaborating with related state and local organizations, and publishing books on Texas in partnership with TCU Press. Our broad educational approach often takes us off campus and into the community where our programs examine history, literature, anthropology, ethnography, politics, religions, philosophy, art, music, food—all elements of the incredible Lone Star mosaic. Through education, knowledge, and confidence we can celebrate the past, the present, and the future.

Thank you to the many individuals and the foundations that generously support our activities, including teacher-education and community history workshops. We could not offer these programs without you. 🇺🇸





# **Adele Briscoe Looscan: Daughter of the Republic** **Available Spring 2016**

**Jerry Don Thompson's biography of Santos Benavides is the subject of an upcoming biography**

**T**he *Texas Biography Series*, a joint project of the Center for Texas Studies at TCU and the TCU Press, is pleased to announce the impending publication of the latest title in the series. Laura McLemore's *Adele Briscoe Looscan: Daughter of the Republic*, is at press and will be published in time for the March 2016 meeting of the Texas State Historical Association. It tells the story of Looscan, a pioneering Houston civic leader, historian, and historical preservationist, who helped to found the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and who was the longest-serving president of the Texas State Historical Association. The Center congratulates Professor McLemore, who holds the William B. Wiener, Jr. Professorship of Archives & Historic Preservation at LSU-Shreveport, on the successful completion of this important book.

We are also pleased to report that the next title in the series, Jerry Don Thompson's

biography of Santos Benavides, is nearing completion and is on schedule for publication a year from now. Benavides was the only Mexican American Confederate general and an important figure in South Texas politics. Like Looscan, he has no scholarly biography. Both of these books will serve the goal of the biography series, which is to publish cutting-edge scholarly biographies of historical Texas figures who either have no biography or no quality modern biography.

The first several titles in the series have been underwritten by a generous grant from the Houston Endowment. In 2011, the Center received an additional grant from the Carl and Florence E. King Foundation and the Summerlee Foundation, ensuring that the series will continue into the future. We are grateful to these foundations for their generosity and vision. 🍀



*Houston clubwoman and historical preservationist Adele Briscoe Looscan*

## **Calling All Authors!**

The Series is always on the lookout for scholars with interesting projects, and I continue to visit with authors who may have promising projects. If you, or someone you know, is working on a biography that would be appropriate for our series, please drop me a line at [g.cantrell@tcu.edu](mailto:g.cantrell@tcu.edu), and I will be happy to send you a copy of our Author's Guidelines and discuss your project with you.

*Gregg Cantrell, Ph.D.*  
*Texas Biographer Series*







# Program News

## Focus on Fort Worth in Extended Education Courses

**T**hrough TCU's Extended Education program, the Center for Texas Studies offers courses specially crafted for people who love all that makes Texas distinctive. In the spring of 2015 retired librarian and local historian Harry Max Hill taught, "A History of Fort Worth Nightclubs from Prohibition through the Sixties," featuring stories from the Skyliner, the Rocket, the Cellar and more famous hotspots. Also, perennial-favorite Quentin McGown offered an evening orientation and Saturday tour of Fort Worth history with "Fort Worth: Queen City of the Prairie." Students learned about natural and prehistoric history, early settlement attempts, construction of the military outpost, establishment of the city, and the economic and social trends that defined early Fort Worth. Stops along the route included a private tour of the William J. Bryce House under restoration and lunch at the scenic Lake Como Pavilion.

During the fall 2015 semester, Quentin returned to teach the third installment of his three-part survey of the history of Fort Worth. Attendees explored the history of the region and the growth of the city from 1940 to the Texas Sesquicentennial. Continuing his theme of Fort Worth entertainment in the 20th century, Harry

Max Hill presented a two-night course titled, "Fort Worth at the Movies." He identified a who's who of Fort Worth natives who became actors, investigated the history of local theaters, highlighted world premieres, and revealed movies filmed in and about Fort Worth. Students also learned about the heavy hand of the Fort Worth Censor Board, the longest running censor board in Texas.

In Spring 2016, look for U.S. Air Force veteran and Fort Worth Aviation Museum board member Bill Morris to offer a two-night course on the history of flight in the city on February 16 and 18. The class will cover early events and achievements in North Texas' 105-year aviation history and how those events laid the foundation which transformed the region from a "cattle and oil" economy into one of the largest aviation centers in the country today. Independent historian Dan Smith will lead a day-long trip along the Bankhead Highway on Saturday, April 23 commemorating the 100th anniversary of the bill that created the first all-weather transcontinental highway across America. An evening class on the preceding Thursday will set the stage for the coach tour which will head west through Weatherford, Palo Pinto,



Millsap, and Strawn with stops including the beautiful rest area at Lovers Retreat. Quentin McGown's annual excursion will tell Fort Worth's story through its historic cemeteries with a class meeting on April 28 followed by the guided tour on April 30. Don't miss this opportunity to visit Pioneer Rest, Historic Oakwood Cemetery, and more with an expert.

For details, visit [www.lifelong.tcu.edu](http://www.lifelong.tcu.edu) and reserve your spot today! ➤



### DO SOMETHING CLASSY THIS SPRING.

Reserve your spot today: [www.lifelong.tcu.edu](http://www.lifelong.tcu.edu)

FEBRUARY 16 & 18:

**Fort Worth Aviation History Course**

*with*

Bill Morris

APRIL 21 & 23:

**Bankhead Highway 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tour**

*with*

Dan Smith

APRIL 28 & 30:

**Tour of Fort Worth's Historic Cemeteries**

*with*

Quentin McGown



“Every person is a historian.”

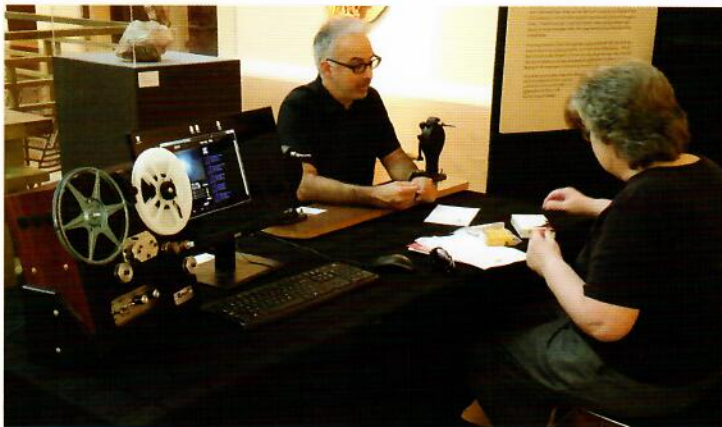
## Workshops Demonstrate Broad Scope of Preservation in Texas

Save your history! That’s what we remind our audience to do at each of the Save Our Past Community History Workshops. No matter how diverse the topics, that message remains the same. This year a group of passionate preservationists and historians shared their expertise with us. They highlighted underutilized historic resources, revealed their most fascinating discoveries, and offered practical preservation advice as part of this series designed to help Texans do their part to protect the past.

Independent scholar Sherrie McLeRoy began the year with “Texas Adoption Activist Edna Gladney: A Life and Legacy of Love,” based on her recent book of the same name. For African American History Month, Dr. Robert Darden, director of the Baylor University’s Black Gospel Music Restoration Project, discussed his important work saving rare gospel recordings. Dan Smith joined us for “Preserving the Bankhead Highway in Texas,” which gave attendees a virtual tour of the nation’s first all-weather transcontinental highway which crossed directly through Fort Worth. Bill Morris from the Fort Worth Aviation Museum explained how the aviation industry made its mark on the land of cattle

and oil. Jerre Tracy, executive director of Historic Fort Worth, gave tips on how to spot an endangered building and stressed the importance of raising public awareness when a structure is threatened.

TCU professor Peter Szok directed his audience to some of the best Mexican restaurants, tortillerias, and dance halls on his gringo’s tour of Latino Fort Worth in September. For Archives Month, the Texas Archives of the Moving Image (TAMI) brought their award-winning film Round-Up to the city. Managing director Madeline Moya delivered an enlightening talk on saving and storing historic films, and then she and other TAMI staff members remained at the Fort Worth Library all weekend collecting over 600 films from the public for digitization and preservation. In “CSI: Fort Worth” forensic scientist Max Courtney told true stories from his own experience in some of the city’s most well-known court room dramas. He examined the key role of good evidence and research



in solving any mystery — criminal, historic, or otherwise. Each December, our partners at the library introduce projects of their own that share the Center’s goal to protect the state’s distinctive past. This year Senior Librarian Rene Gomez will reveal the story behind the city’s historic public housing projects and explain their importance to the veterans of World War II in “The Evolution of Public Housing in Fort Worth.”

Community History Workshops are held one Saturday a month from January – May and September – December at 10:30 a.m. in the Tandy Lecture Hall at the Fort Worth Public Library. They are made possible thanks to the support of the Summerlee Foundation and the Sommerfield G. Roberts Foundation. For a complete schedule of upcoming events, visit [www.texasstudies.org](http://www.texasstudies.org). 🇺🇸

## Partnership with Region 11 Education Service Center Facilitates Teacher Training

The Center for Texas Studies partners with the Region 11 Education Service Center (ESC) in Fort Worth to provide on-site teacher workshops to area school districts. Getting away from a demanding classroom routine to pursue professional development can be challenging for local educators. A generous grant from the Amon G. Carter Foundation enables the Center to send TCU faculty out in the community to provide accessible learning opportunities right where they are needed at no charge

to the school. By coordinating efforts with the ESC, we identify schools seeking academic expertise in arts and sciences and schedule programs specifically tailored to meet their goals. As part of the package, an ESC staff member is available to follow the professor’s remarks with an interactive session full of techniques to employ new content in the classroom according to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

When the ESC gathers local social studies leaders for training, Assistant Director LeAnna Schooley frequently drops by to share information about Center programs with the group. The wide-ranging expertise of TCU professors is a tremendous resource that we are anxious to share. We are pleased to help teachers hone their skills and provide new tools to engage today’s students. 🇺🇸





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