HOUSTON
Past, Present & Progress

Selections from the Handbook of Houston

HHA
Houston History Alliance

TSHA
Texas State Historical Association
An independent educational non-profit
Dear Reader:

In the study of Texas history, Houston often is eclipsed by the Alamo of San Antonio, the ranches of West Texas, or even the “weirdness” of Austin. But this boomtown, founded on the banks of Buffalo Bayou in 1836, has proven itself to be immensely important and often surprising. Since its beginning, Houston has been a city focused on progress, always keeping an eye towards the future. Yet it also has a rich history, which has significantly impacted the state, the nation, and the world. Houston served as the first permanent capital of the Republic of Texas, hosted the state’s first presidential convention for a national political party, and built Texas’s first freeway and the world’s first air-conditioned sports stadium. In 1969 “Houston” rang out as the first word spoken from the moon, a nod to its legacy as “Space City.”

Houston’s history is as varied and eclectic as its myriad nicknames, from “Where Seventeen Railroads Meet the Sea” and “Magnolia City” to “Bayou City” and “H-Town.” Proud to be the most diverse metropolitan area in the United States, Houston has no racial/ethnic majority. For over 180 years, this city has opened its arms and offered respite, jobs, and new opportunities to residents old and new.

As you will read here, this welcoming culture led Houston to become home to the first AIDS hospital in the United States, NASA’s Johnson Space Center, and the 1928 National Democratic Convention. Many individuals, like Jesse Jones, Kezia Payne Depelchin, and Tsunekichi Okasaki, worked diligently towards building a thriving metropolis. Countless other entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators, some of whom you’ll learn about in the pages that follow, shaped Houston into the city it is today.
Houston has played a vital part in the growth and development of Texas and is therefore a natural choice for the first city-focused spinoff of the *Handbook of Texas*. The Houston History Alliance (HHA) is proud of our partnership with the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) to create this robust record of our city’s past. Thanks to the generous underwriting of Houston Endowment, this handbook has become a reality after many years as a dream project, and we encourage you to take the time to explore the full *Handbook of Houston* online through the Texas State Historical Association.

A very special thank you is due to the board of the Houston History Alliance, led by Cecelia Ottenweller, and the members of the Handbook of Houston advisory committee, led by J.R. Gonzales. Our hope with the handbook and this corresponding eBook is that you will either expand your love for our great city or discover a new appreciation for it as you learn more about Houston and its historic past.

Go forth and discover Houston.

Lindsay Scovil Dove
Editor, *Handbook of Houston*
Dear Texas History Lover,

Texas has a special place in history and in the minds of people throughout the world. Texas also has the distinction of being the only state in the United States that was an independent country for almost ten years—free and separate—recognized as a sovereign government by the United States, France, and England.

For more than a century, the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) has played a leadership role in Texas history research and education and has helped to identify, collect, preserve, and tell the stories of Texas. It has now entered into a new collaboration with the University of Texas at Austin to carry on and expand its work. In the coming years these two organizations, with their partners and members, will create a collaborative whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. The collaboration will provide passion, talent, and long-term support for the dissemination of scholarly research, educational programs for the K-12 community, and opportunities for public discourse about the complex issues and personalities of our heritage.

TSHA’s core programs include the Texas Almanac, Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Handbook of Texas Online, TSHA Press, and education programs that reach out to students and teachers at all levels throughout the state. The central challenge before TSHA is to seize the unprecedented opportunities of the digital age in order to reshape how history will be accessed, understood, preserved, disseminated, and taught in the twenty-first century. In recent years, we have capitalized on these momentous opportunities to expand the scope and depth of our work in ways never before possible.

We are proud to announce the Handbook of Houston and the related Houston: Past, Present, and Progress eBook. This would not have been possible without support from the Houston Endowment, the hard work of our TSHA staff, as well as our partnership with the Houston History Alliance (HHA). Special thanks goes to Lindsay Scovil Dove who was instrumental in the making this handbook spinoff.
In the midst of this rapid change, TSHA will continue to provide a future for our heritage and to ensure that the lessons of our history continue to serve as a resource for the people of Texas. I encourage you to join us today as a member of TSHA, and in doing so, you will be part of a unique group of people dedicated to standing as vanguards of our proud Texas heritage and will help us continue to develop innovative programs that bring history to life.

Since 1987, TSHA has sought to spread the rich and unique history of Texas across, not just the country, but the world. As we celebrate the progress of the last 120 years, we look forward to bringing our state’s past into your life through an ever-shifting digital presences, the expansion of publications and the growth of our immersive educational programs. With your membership, donations and support all these things are possible.

With Texas Pride,

Brian A. Bolinger
CEO
Texas State Historical Association

Randolph “Mike” Campbell
Chief Historian
Texas State Historical Association
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by Cecelia Ottenweller

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In 2015 Houston, covering 627 square miles, ranked as the fourth largest city in the United States with an estimated population of 2,296,224. The city passed Philadelphia in 1984 to take a position behind New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. The 2015 population of the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area (known as Greater Houston), which encompassed Galveston, Fort Bend, Harris, Brazoria, Liberty, Waller, Montgomery, Chambers, and Austin counties, amounted to 6,656,947. This ranked it fifth in the nation and second in Texas to Dallas-Fort Worth. When first formed in 1949 the Houston Standard Metropolitan Area covered only Harris County and had a population of 806,701 people. More than 100 ethnic groups now shape the population of the city; the major components in 2015 were 26 percent non-Hispanic white, 25 percent black, 43 percent Hispanic of any race, and 6 percent Asian. This spectacular growth developed as a result of the construction of transportation systems, the fortuitous nearby location of useful natural resources, and an entrepreneurial spirit.

The city began on August 30, 1836, when Augustus Chapman Allen and John Kirby Allen ran an advertisement in the Telegraph and Texas Register for the "Town of Houston." The townsite, which featured a mixture of timber and grassland, was on the level Coastal Plain in the middle of the future Harris County, at 95.4° west longitude.
and 30.3° north latitude. The brothers claimed that the town would become the "great interior commercial emporium of Texas," that ships from New York and New Orleans could sail up Buffalo Bayou to its door, and that the site enjoyed a healthy, cool seabreeze. They noted plans to build a sawmill and offered lots for sale at moderate prices. In the manner of town boomers the Allens exaggerated a bit, however. The forty-eight-inch annual rainfall, high relative humidity, and temperatures that averaged from a low of 43° F in the winter to 94° in summer later inspired Houston to become one of the most air-conditioned cities in the world. Moreover, in January 1837, when Francis R. Lubbock arrived on the Laura, the small steamship that first reached Houston, he found the bayou choked with branches and the town almost invisible.

The Allen brothers named their town after Sam Houston and persuaded the Texas Congress to designate the site as the temporary capital of the new Republic of Texas (see CAPITALS). The promoters offered lots and buildings to the government. On January 1, 1837, the town comprised twelve residents and one log cabin; four months later there were 1,500 people and 100 houses. Gail and Thomas H. Borden surveyed and mapped the town in typical gridiron fashion, with broad streets running parallel and perpendicular to the bayou. The legislature first met in Houston on May 1, 1837, and, despite the efforts of Masons who greeted one another in 1837 and the Presbyterians and Episcopalians who formed churches in 1839, the town remained infamous for drunkenness, dueling, brawling, prostitution, and profanity. The legislature granted incorporation on June 5, 1837, and James S. Holman became the first mayor. The same year, Houston also became the county seat of Harrisburg County, which was renamed Harris County in 1839. During the nineteenth century, aldermen elected by wards directed the city government. In 1905 the city began to use a modified commission form with aldermen elected at large. Houston switched to a city manager government from 1942 to 1947, and then subsequently to a strong-mayor with council form (see CITY GOVERNMENT). A 1979 United States Justice Department ruling led to nine city council members elected from districts, and five elected at large. Two additional districts were created in 2011, increasing the total number of city council members to sixteen. Voters selected the first African American for the council in 1971 and the first Mexican American in 1979. Houston's first female mayor was elected in 1981, followed
by the first African American mayor in 1997. In 2009 Houston became the first U.S. city with a population over 1,000,000 to elect an openly gay mayor.

The early settlers used lumber to build frame houses, ditches for drainage, and pigs to clean the streets. Yellow fever struck periodically—in 1839, 1844, 1847, 1848, 1854, 1858, 1859, 1862, and 1867—until it was controlled by quarantine of the coastline. In 1839 the disease killed about 12 percent of the population. Since many of the first Houston settlers were from the South, they endorsed the slavery-plantation system and used urban slaves for menial tasks (see SLAVERY, URBAN). This started Houston on the same bifurcated pathway as other Southern towns, where the black minority developed a subordinated and separate social structure. The slaves lived scattered through the neighborhoods, were subject to an 8:00 P.M. curfew, and could not take employment without their owners’ permission. There were few free blacks in the city.
Although Houston started as a political boomtown in the nineteenth century, its livelihood depended upon cotton and commerce. The Texas government left Houston for Austin in 1839, and the city settled into the rhythm of agriculture. Businessmen such as William Marsh Rice, Thomas M. Bagby, Charles Shearn, William J. Hutchins, Paul Bremond, and A. S. Ruthven established trade connections. Activity was greatest during harvest and marketing times, while the rest of the year was spent in sending supplies to farmers. Oceangoing ships brought to Galveston cargoes of cloth, flour, whiskey, gunpowder, iron castings, lead, coffee, sugar, nails, books, and hundreds of little items. Small river steamships took the goods from Galveston to Houston. The merchants then sent them by ox wagon to the farmers in the hinterland. In the reverse direction came cotton, corn, and hides through Houston to Galveston and on to New Orleans, New York, and Europe. The Telegraph and Texas Register moved to Houston and began its publication there on May 2, 1837. The Houston Morning Star started on April 8, 1839. These early newspapers reflected the local interests in cotton production, roads, railways, and bayou clearance.

After the Civil War, separation of the races continued with segregated schools and dissociated churches, clubs, bands, businesses, and sports teams. Segregation by law began with separation on trollies in 1903. It continued through the first half of the twentieth century, during which blacks were excluded from or had only limited access to white parks, depots, schools, drinking fountains, buses, restrooms, and restaurants. Though residential segregation never became part of the legal code, it did operate as part of the social code. Separate residential areas developed for African Americans, Mexican Americans, and whites by the end of the century. Despite occasional outbursts such as the Houston Riot of 1917, when a black army unit shot up the town and left nineteen people dead, nothing changed the legacy of slavery until the civil-rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.
the Buffalo Bayou Ship Channel Company. **Charles Morgan**, a Gulf Coast shipowner, eventually took over and in 1876 opened a twelve-foot-deep waterway to Clinton, a port town below Houston. The United States government assumed Morgan's work in 1881 and after delays dug a ship channel through **Galveston Bay** and Buffalo Bayou to a turning basin above Harrisburg. The **Houston Ship Channel** opened in 1914 and has been since widened and deepened. It made Houston a deepwater port variously ranked second or third largest in the United States, with access to the shipping of the world. Complementing this facility, Houstonians worked to build railroads into the countryside. Paul Bremond, a Houston merchant, began a slow northwestward construction of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad in 1853. This line started as the Galveston and Red River, changed its name in 1856, and reached Hempstead in 1858. Meanwhile, the **Houston Tap and Brazoria**, a seven-mile railway, joined the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railway at Pierce Junction in 1856. This linked Houston with the sugar plantations of the Brazos valley. Other roads were started, and by 1861 Houston was the rail center of Southeast Texas with five lines stretching fifty to 100 miles south, southeast, west, east, and northwest. The Civil War interrupted construction, but building revived afterwards. When the **Houston and Texas Central** reached Denison in 1873, Houston joined the national rail network. The railroads efficiently spanned the muddy bogs of the coastal prairie. Although roads existed from the start, travel was
often slow and rough. Roadwork was costly, and significant improvement came only with the construction of all-weather highways in the 1920s. The city's first expressway, the Gulf Freeway, connected Houston and Galveston in 1952 and later became a part of the interstate highway system. Houston opened its first airport in 1928, Houston International Airport in 1954 (renamed William P. Hobby Airport in 1967), and Houston Intercontinental Airport in 1969 (renamed George Bush Intercontinental Airport in 1997). The city acquired Ellington Airport (formerly Ellington Air Force Base) in 1984. The various transportation systems, along with the communication systems of mail, telegraph (built in 1853-54) and telephone (1878-95), allowed Houston to develop as a cotton and lumber market in the nineteenth century. The discovery of oil at the Spindletop oilfield dramatically changed the Houston economy in the twentieth century. Oil companies chose to locate refineries along the Houston Ship Channel, where they were safe from Gulf storms. By 1929 forty oil companies had located offices in the city. The most important were the Texas Company (now Texaco), Humble Oil and Refining Company (now Exxon), and Gulf Oil Corporation. Sinclair Oil Company built the first major refinery in 1918.

World War II brought a demand for synthetic rubber, gasoline, materials for explosives, and ships from the area. Concrete barges, steel merchant vessels, and mid-size warships were built along the ship channel. Houston Shipbuilding Corporation, a subsidiary of Todd Shipbuilding Corporation, for example, built Liberty Ships and employed 20,000 workers by July 1942. The Brown Shipbuilding Company pioneered broadside launching and produced more than 300 war vessels by the end of the war.
The developments of the twentieth century, however, made Houston the largest city in Texas in 1930, when the population was 292,000. At this time Houston had three newspapers—the Houston Post (founded 1880), the Houston Chronicle (1901), and the Houston Press (1911)—and four radio stations—KPRC (1925), KTRH (1930), KTLC (1930), and KXYZ (1930).

Facilities for urban living had to develop along with the growth. Merchants and others complained about the city streets from the beginning. Efforts to rise out of the mud and dust featured experiments with cypress blocks, gravel, planks, shell, limestone blocks, and later cement and asphalt. In 1915 Houston had almost 196 miles of paved streets. In 1922 the municipal government began to replace wooden bridges with steel and concrete. Electric streetlights appeared in 1884 and an electric streetcar system in 1891. Automobiles came at the beginning of the century and caught on fast; there were 1,031 in Harris County in 1911 and 97,902 in 1930. This growth led to traffic regulations on speed (fifteen miles per hour in 1907), one-way streets in 1920, and traffic signals in 1921. The increasing use of automobiles also led to the building of expressways in the 1950s that extended over 200 miles by 1990, as well as air pollution, urban sprawl, and traffic jams.

(see SHIPBUILDING). Nearby coastal deposits of salt, sulfur, and natural gas supplied the ingredients for petrochemicals, and the United States government provided the contracts for war materials. On this foundation after the war Greater Houston developed one of the two largest petrochemical concentrations in the United States with refineries operated at various times by such companies as Dow, Du Pont, BASF, Shell, Sinclair, ExxonMobil, Chevron Phillips, Valero, Lyondell, Basell, and Goodyear. By 1990 a complex of some 250 interrelated refineries extended from Corpus Christi along the coast to the Louisiana border. The main exports and imports of the Port of Houston, consequently, were petroleum or petroleum-related products. Houston thus became a world energy capital in the 1970s, expanded with the rise in oil prices, and suffered with the downturn during the 1980s. As a result, in the mid-1980s, Houston lost population for the only time in its history.

Allen’s Landing in the early 1900s.
Courtesy of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.
The most important urban necessity, the water supply, improved in the late 1880s after several citizens discovered artesian water by drilling shallow wells. Well water thus replaced the contaminated bayou water supplied by the privately-owned Houston Water Works Company. The city took over the company in 1906 and rapidly expanded the number of artesian wells. Continued pumping from the aquifer, however, resulted in subsidence of the land in southeastern Houston in the 1960s. To avoid further sinking, the city turned to newly-built reservoirs on the Trinity and San Jacinto rivers for most of its water. The paving of land and consequent quick runoff of rain resulted in a flood problem. Severe floods in 1929 and 1935 led to the formation of the Harris County Flood Control District. After 1937 the district worked with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to construct two major floodwater detention reservoirs—Barker Reservoir (completed in 1945) and Addicks Reservoir (1948)—as well as hundreds of miles of man-made water channels, but storm flooding in parts of the metropolitan area has continued. Water pollution has also been a long-standing problem. Surges of rainwater into the bayous have flushed the contamination of the ship channel into Galveston Bay and caused fish kills. While building the channel, the United States Army Corps of Engineers forced the city to construct a sewage-disposal system that, when completed in 1902, was among the best in the nation. Urban growth and neglect, however, overcame the advance.

Land developers inspired the spread of the city when they built suburbs such as Pasadena (1892), Houston Heights (1892), Deer Park (1892), Bellaire (1911), and West University Place (1919). The most famous, because of its wealth, was River Oaks (1922-24), started by Mike and William Clifford Hogg and Hugh Potter. There, architect John F. Staub designed tasteful homes to match the curved streets and large green lawns. Suburbs have since spread out in the metropolitan region. An important example is The Woodlands, a HUD Title VII "new town" built by oilman George T. Mitchell between 1964 and 1983 north of Houston in southern Montgomery County. Mitchell blended homes, business places, and recreation facilities into the pine woods with minimal environmental disturbance. In 1948-49, to avoid encirclement by incorporated suburbs, the Houston City Council under Mayor Oscar F. Holcombe used its annexation power to envelop the older suburbs. As a result the city more than doubled in size, from 73 square miles in 1940 to 160 square miles in 1950. In 1956 the council voted more annexation—again doubling the size of the city—and in 1960 while fighting with neighboring towns, the council threatened to annex all unclaimed land in Harris County. Compromises finally brought the annexation war under control. Part of the dispute involved the rich and prestigious land around Clear Lake to the south, where in 1961 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration built the Lyndon B.
Johnson Space Center. Houston eventually assumed control the land in 1977. Subsequent annexations grew the city from 540 square miles in 1980 to 627 square miles by 2015. The bitterly-contested annexation of Kingwood, Texas, in 1996 resulted in changes to state law that have since limited the city's annexation power.

In the ordering of urban space Houston politicians and voters have rejected the use of zoning. The administration of Mayor Kathy Whitmire in the 1980s brought the subject up for review, but Houston remained infamous as the largest unzoned city in the United States. The lack of zoning has not affected development to any great extent, however, since heavy industry concentrated in the area of the ship channel and subdivisions controlled construction through deed restrictions. This casual attitude toward land use encouraged business expansion. The greatest city builder in the first half of the twentieth century was banker Jesse H. Jones. By the mid-1920s he had constructed about thirty commercial structures, and in 1956 he controlled fifty buildings. He brought the 1928 Democratic convention to the city and later served as Franklin D. Roosevelt's secretary of commerce. His most impressive structure was the thirty-seven-story Gulf Building, completed in 1929. The prosperity after World War II brought the world famous Galleria shopping mall with its interior ice-skating rink in 1970; Pennzoil Place, a startling black-glass downtown building in 1976; and the Astrodome in 1965. In 1992 Houston hosted the Republican national convention. Thanks to construction fueled largely by the 1970s oil boom, the Houston skyline became a showcase of modern architecture and home to seven of the state's
ten tallest buildings by 1987. A second construction boom began in the mid-2000s, and by 2016 the city contained 360 high-rises, including forty-five skyscrapers over 400 feet.

The city meanwhile matured culturally and socially. The Texas Medical Center, once famous primarily for heart transplants, emerged as a global focal point for heart and cancer treatment and is now the world's largest medical complex. In 2016 the center was among the largest employers in Houston, with 106,000 employees, and was also home to the world's largest cancer and children's hospitals. In 1971 Dominique and John de Menil built the Rothko Chapel, which became a place of religious pilgrimage, and in 1987 Dominique de Menil constructed a gallery to house the Menil Collection of modern art. This added to the collections of art that began with the opening of the Museum of Fine Arts in 1924. A free secondary school system began in 1877 and became the Houston Independent School District in 1924. This district is now one of the largest in the nation. Rice University started in 1912, financed by a bequest from William Marsh Rice, who made his fortune in Houston in the nineteenth century. The University of Houston began as a junior college in 1927 and was supported by oilman Hugh Roy Cullen in its early years, until it became part of the state system of higher education in 1963. KUHT-TV, which started in 1953 at the university, was the first educational television station in the United States. Texas Southern University began in 1934 as part of the University of Houston. The University of St. Thomas began in 1945 and Houston Baptist University in 1963. In 1914 George H. Hermann donated Hermann Park, where a thirty-acre zoo was established in 1922. Memorial Park, the other major Houston park, developed from land purchased in 1924. The Houston Symphony
Orchestra was formed in 1913, the Houston Grand Opera in 1956, the Alley Theatre in 1947, and the Houston Ballet in 1969. The Houston Public Library opened in 1904 with the help of Andrew Carnegie. Television began in 1949 with broadcasts from KLEE-TV, which became KPRC-TV in 1950. Seven other stations followed. Professional sports teams arrived—the Houston Astros (the Colt .45s until 1964) baseball team in 1962, the Houston Oilers football team in 1959, and the Houston Rockets basketball team in 1971. The Oilers, who relocated to Tennessee in 1997, were replaced by the Houston Texans in 2002, and the Houston Dynamo soccer team was established in 2005.
Part I: Civic Leadership
“A Culture of Leadership”

“Houston is exceptional in that philanthropy makes up for a lot of it. It’s kind of a calling here. It’s a culture of leadership—of getting things done.” – Ann Stern, Houston Endowment

You’ll find them in every city: philanthropists, community organizers, and dedicated entrepreneurs. Houston’s history is filled with those characters who molded the city through actions large and small, all of which helped guide the city’s growth.

Take Jesse H. Jones for example. Before 1928, no Southern city had hosted a national political convention since before the Civil War. But Jones changed all that when he successfully secured Houston’s bid to host the 1928 Democratic National Convention.

At the same time, Julia Ideson was helping increase literacy in Houston. Since 1903, Ideson had been a librarian at the Houston Public Library. Over the course of the next forty years, she made sure that the library collection kept pace with the rapid growth of the city. But her work did not stop there. She dedicated her time and energy toward the women’s suffrage movement and supported the war effort during World War I.

While Ideson made sure Houstonians expanded their minds through the printed word, Felix Tijerina provided Hispanics a much-needed chance to learn English. The Houston restaurateur was concerned about the high number of Spanish-speaking children dropping out of school. As a leader of the League of United Latin American Citizens, he was able to work with the state to establish the Little Schools of the 400, which taught English-language skills to young Hispanics in preparation for grade school work.
Part I: Civic Leadership

“A Culture of Leadership”

Houston benefitted in the collegiate realm as well. Financier and philanthropist William Marsh Rice had business interests throughout Texas and the United States. Even though he lived outside the state for a number of years, he never forgot the ties he forged in Houston, setting aside funds in 1891 for the William Marsh Rice Institute for the advancement of literature, science, and art. Though it would be more than twenty years before his vision came to fruition, Rice University would become one of the top educational institutions in the nation.

In Houston’s growing medical community, Thelma Adele Patten Law was the city’s first black female physician. With a specialty in obstetrics and gynecology, Law delivered hundreds of babies at Houston Negro Hospital. For years, she tirelessly worked to improve the lives of disadvantaged American Americans.

These Houstonians provided so much for the city—through their time, energy, and never ending support—and their backgrounds reflect the diversity that has permeated Houston’s past and present.

- J. R. Gonzales
Jesse H. Jones, businessman and New Deal official, son of William Hasque and Laura Anna (Holman) Jones, was born in Robertson County, Tennessee, on April 5, 1874. Jesse's mother died when he was six years old, and his father's widowed sister, Nancy Hurt, became the Jones children's surrogate mother. When Jesse was nine, the family moved to Dallas, Texas, where William Jones managed his brother's lumberyard in Terrell. Two years later they moved back to a farm on the Kentucky-Tennessee border. After completing the ninth grade, young Jesse was placed in charge of one of his father's tobacco factories. In 1891 the family returned to Dallas where Jesse entered Hill's Business College. In 1895 he went to work in his uncle's firm, the M. T. Jones Lumber Company, in Hillsboro, Texas, and later became manager of the company's Dallas lumberyard, then the largest in town. In 1898, after his uncle's death, Jones went to Houston as general manager where he remained with the company for another seven years. During this period he established his own business, the South Texas Lumber Company. He then began to expand into real estate, commercial buildings, and banking. In a few years he was the largest developer in the area and was responsible for most of Houston's major prewar construction. Besides owning nearly 100 buildings in Houston, Jones also built structures in Fort Worth, Dallas, and New York City. Gradually he sold his lumber interest, except for one yard in Houston, and began to concentrate on real estate and banking. In 1908 he bought part of the Houston Chronicle. Between 1908 and 1918 he organized and became chairman of the Texas Trust Company and was active in most of the banking and real estate activities of the city. In 1909 he switched his religious affiliation from Baptist to Methodist. By 1912 he was president of the National
Bank of Commerce (later Texas Commerce Bank, and by 2008, part of JPMorgan Chase & Co.) During this period he made one of his few ventures into oil as an original stockholder in Humble Oil and Refining Company (now Exxon Company, U.S.A.). As chairman of the Houston harbor board he raised money for the Houston Ship Channel.

During **World War I** President Woodrow Wilson asked Jones to become the director general of military relief for the American Red Cross. He remained in this position until he returned to Houston in 1919. In December 1920 he married Mary Gibbs of Mexia. He became the sole owner of the Houston *Chronicle* in 1926. Jones served as director of finance for the Democratic National Committee, made a $200,000 donation, and promised to build a hall. These actions were instrumental in bringing the 1928 Democratic national convention to Houston. At the convention Jones was nominated as a "favorite son." On the recommendation of **John Nance Garner**, President Herbert Hoover appointed Jones to the board of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, a new government entity established to combat the **Great Depression**. President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Jones chairman of the RFC, a position he held from 1933 until 1939. In this capacity, Jones became one of the most powerful men in America. He helped prevent the nationwide failure of farms, banks, railroads, and many other businesses. The RFC became the leading financial institution in America and the primary investor in the economy. The agency also facilitated a broadening of Texas industry from agriculture and oil into steel and chemicals. Jones's success in Washington was closely associated with Roosevelt and Garner. Roosevelt realized that his outstanding weakness was his lack of rapport with business. Jones provided a connection as businessmen respected him. Garner and Jones were conservatives, however, and did not always approve of the politics of the New Deal. During Roosevelt's regime, these two were undoubtedly the second and third most influential men in Washington. Jones's control extended to such RFC
subsidiaries as the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Electric Home and Farm Authority, the RFC Mortgage Company, the Federal National Mortgage Association, and the Export-Import Bank. Moreover, the RFC helped to finance many public works programs. Jones's tough business acumen made the RFC the most powerful and successful agency in the Roosevelt administration. In 1939 Roosevelt appointed Jones to head the Federal Loan Agency. Jones resigned as head of the RFC, but as Federal Loan Administrator continued overall control of the RFC. He also had general supervision over the Federal Housing Authority and the Home Owners Loan Corporation.

After flirting with the vice-presidential nomination in 1940, Jones was offered the post of secretary of commerce. With congressional approval, he was allowed to retain his post as FLA chief during the war years, when he supervised more than thirty agencies that received federal money. Jones's relationship with the president and some members of his cabinet, however, deteriorated. In 1944 Roosevelt believed that Jones was allied with Republican Thomas E. Dewey against him. On January 20, 1945, Jones received a letter from the president asking him to resign so that the post could be given to Henry Wallace, his former vice president. Jones was offered other positions but declined and returned to Houston. From this time to his death he occupied himself with his business ventures and philanthropy. He also broke with the Democratic leadership and supported the Republican ticket in 1948 and 1952. After a brief illness, he died on June 1, 1956, and was buried in Forest Park Cemetery in Houston. The Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts in Houston was named for him. Houston Endowment, which he established in 1937, was the nation's fifteenth largest by 1979. In 1988 the Jesse H. Jones and Mary Gibbs Jones Endowed Presidential Scholarship in the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Business was established by a gift of Houston Endowment. Collections of Jones's papers and memorabilia are housed at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, at the Library of Congress, and at Houston Endowment.
In the winter of 1927 Jesse H. Jones traveled to Washington, D.C., with a certified check for $200,000 to enter Houston's bid for the Democratic National Convention to be held the following summer. His proposal was initially met with skepticism since Houston, a booming but still relatively small city of just 300,000, could not compete with the venues and accommodations offered by larger, more established metropolises like San Francisco, Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago. Serious concerns also existed regarding the oppressive midsummer heat and humidity of the Bayou City, which would be the southernmost city ever to host a national party convention. However, in what is generally recognized as a conciliatory move, the national committee accepted the city's offer. Even then the nomination of Al Smith—the Catholic, Tammany Hall-backed New York governor who aggressively opposed prohibition—seemed likely, and national party officials in the East felt the need to appease the Protestant, prohibitionist South, which had not hosted a national convention since before the Civil War. Preparations in Houston began almost immediately. Sam Houston Hall, with a seating capacity of 16,000, six acres of floor space, an open-air ceiling, and giant "typhoon" fans to aid air circulation, was built in just sixty-four working days.
The convention opened on June 26, 1928. Al Smith remained in Albany but faced little competition from other candidates. Other names placed in nomination included Senator James Reed of Missouri, Representative Cordell Hull of Tennessee, and Jesse H. Jones of Texas. However, no contender provided a serious threat to Smith, and most candidates agreed to stand behind the party and support the convention's nominee. At the first roll call, Smith received 724 2/3 votes, ten short of the number (two-thirds of the total) required for nomination. Ohio then switched its votes to Smith, and other states followed suit. Texas, the notable exception, cast its forty votes for Jones. State politicians had long opposed Smith's nomination. Former Texas governor Oscar B. Colquitt publicly argued that Smith sought to nullify a provision of the Constitution only because it "happened to be out of harmony with his personal opinions," and that "to nullify this part of the organic law will bring contempt for other parts of it."

Nevertheless, Smith easily won the nomination in Houston with 849 2/3 votes. Although women's temperance groups and the local Baptist church held all-day and all-night prayer meetings near the convention hall and insisted that God would intervene to prevent the "catastrophe" of Smith's nomination, inside the hall the delegates saw Smith as their only hope of victory over the Republicans in the fall.

With Smith nominated, party officials looked to the vice-presidential slot and the official platform as means of ensuring harmony within the party. Many observers perceived the Texas delegation, in particular, as aloof and hostile towards Smith. Judge George W. Olvany, a Tammany Hall leader, therefore sent his and Jesse Jones's friend Col. Joseph M. Hartfield to offer Jones the nomination for vice president. Jones declined, and the Texas delegation considered supporting either Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen, commander of the Nineteenth Division, or, a more likely possibility, Senator Alben Barkley of Kentucky.

However, upon the prodding of one state delegate who insisted that the Texas delegation get "behind the ticket and [show] New York and the Democratic Party that Texans were true Democrats," the Texas delegates unanimously decided to support Smith's choice, Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas, the Democratic minority leader. Robinson supported prohibition and was the first southerner, apart from Woodrow Wilson, to have a place on the national ticket since the Civil War.
Harmony prevailed as well in the drafting of the party platform. The most heated controversy centered around prohibition and its enforcement. Texas governor Daniel J. Moody, Jr., was expected to pursue a floor fight for a "bone-dry" plank on prohibition. However, when the proposed plank, which pledged "the party and its nominees to an honest effort to enforce the eighteenth amendment and all other provisions of the Federal Constitution and all laws enacted pursuant thereto," was accepted by such recognized prohibitionists as former secretary of the navy Josephus Daniels and Methodist bishop James Cannon, Moody decided to relinquish his fight.

The convention ended on June 29. During the final moments a telegram from Smith accepting the nomination was read to the delegates. Many of the dry delegates were stunned by the party's stand on prohibition and immediately questioned the appropriateness of their candidate. The nominee's message read, "It is well-known that I believe there should be fundamental changes in the present provisions for national prohibition. . . . I feel it to be the duty of the chosen leader of the people to point the way which, in his opinion, leads us to a sane, sensible solution of a condition which, I am convinced, is entirely unsatisfactory to the great mass of our people."

The candidate's remarks prompted many anti-Smith Democrats eventually to join forces with Republicans and elect Herbert Hoover in November 1928. In Texas the massive defection of Democrats was attributed both to Smith's antiprohibition views and his Catholicism. The state gave Hoover a majority, the first time in history that a Republican presidential candidate had carried Texas. The election had severely divided the Democrats and in some respects foreshadowed a significant decline in the state's support of the national Democratic party in the coming years.
Julia Bedford Ideson, pioneer librarian and civic activist, daughter of John Castree and Rosalie (Beasman) Ideson, was born on July 15, 1880, in Hastings, Nebraska. Her father owned a bookstore in Hastings, where she and her sister, Margaret, attended the Academy of the Visitation, a Catholic convent school. The family moved to Houston, Texas, in 1892, where Ideson attended public schools and graduated from Houston High School in 1899. She then enrolled in the first program in library science offered by the University of Texas at Austin. While in college, Ideson was an assistant cataloguer in the school library, a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and the Ashbel literary society, and served as associate editor of the University of Texas literary magazine.

After graduating from the University of Texas in 1903, and with ample recommendations from her advising professors, Ideson was appointed librarian of the new Houston Lyceum and Carnegie Library (see HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY). She held this position for more than forty years and, in anticipation of Houston's rapid growth, engineered a dramatic expansion of the city's public library system. By the time of her death in 1945, the library's collection had increased from 13,228 to 265,707 volumes, and annual circulation had risen from 60,000 to 600,000. Her efforts to improve physical facilities had also resulted in the addition of five branches, a new Central Library built in Spanish Renaissance style, and the first municipal bookmobile in the state.

Julia Ideson served as secretary (1907–09) and president (1910–11) of the Texas Library Association, president of the Southwestern Library Association (1932–34), and first vice...
Throughout her career, she remained an active supporter of various civic causes and organizations. As a member of the Women's Political Union, she spoke at the first open-air woman suffrage rally in Texas in 1915 and helped to arrange a reception for the visiting Emmeline Pankhurst. Like many suffragists, Ideson turned her attention to the war effort in 1917. She toured Southeast Texas and campaigned for Liberty Bonds as a member of the Harris County Women's Committee, organized a library at Camp Logan in Houston, and served eight months at the field library of Camp Pontanezen in Brest, France, as a member of the American Library Association's Library War Service. In later years she was active in such groups as the League of Women Voters, the Houston Open Forum, the Foreign Policy Association, and the Texas Interracial Commission. Her professional and civic achievements brought her recognition in 1929 as the Torchbearer of the Year and in 1932 as the first Houston woman included in Who's Who in America.

Julia Ideson died of a heart attack on July 15, 1945, while visiting a friend in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. She was interred at Hollywood Cemetery in Houston. The Central Library building, erected in 1926 and later named in her honor in 1951, was president of the American Library Association (1932–33). She served on the Legislative Committee of the Texas Library Association, where she helped to prepare an amendment to the County Library Law of 1915 and opposed a bill that would have abolished the Texas State Library in 1933. Ideson also played a central role in the establishment of the Colored Carnegie Library, Houston's first public library for African American patrons, and volunteered to train its inaugural staff in 1913. Providing library services for blacks in the South remained one of her primary concerns and was the topic of her address at the American Library Association meeting at Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1923. She also convinced the Texas Library Association to form a special committee on penal libraries in 1925 and later served as a library consultant for the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville. Additionally, she edited multiple volumes of the Texas Library Association's Handbook of Texas Libraries.

American Library Association Volunteers in Paris on February 27, 1919. Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives.
added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. It was subsequently renovated and reopened in 1979 to house the archives, special collections, and Texas Room of the **Houston Metropolitan Research Center**. Since then, the building has been designated a local, state, and national protected landmark. A new archival wing and an outdoor reading garden were added in 2010, followed by a substantial restoration and renovation effort that concluded in 2011. These efforts have made the Julia Ideson Building the architectural centerpiece of the Houston Public Library system as well as one of the most comprehensive urban history archives in the United States.
Felix Tijerina, restaurateur, civic leader, and philanthropist, was born in Sugar Land, Texas, in 1905, one of four children of Rafael and Dionicia Tijerina, who were migrant farmworkers. Rafael Tijerina died when his son was eight, and Felix spent the next five years working in the South Texas cottonfields to support his mother and three sisters. At age thirteen he moved to Houston, where he found a job as a busboy at the Original Mexican Restaurant for nine dollars a week. He remained there for the next several years, learned the trade, and worked in various capacities. In 1928 he opened his first restaurant, the Mexican Inn, on Main Street, which he operated with Antonio Reynaga. In 1933 Tijerina married Juanita (Janie) González, and the couple shared their home with his mother and three sisters. The restaurant went out of business in 1935. For the next two years the Tijerinas earned their income in sales work; in 1937 they opened Felix's Mexican Restaurant, on Westheimer. By the early 1950s they owned and operated four restaurants in Houston and the surrounding area. Tijerina was one of the founders of the Latin American Club of Harris County, which registered Mexican-American voters and tried to educate their community on political rights and responsibilities. In 1935 LAC merged with the local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens to form LULAC Council 60, one of the largest and most active LULAC chapters in the state. Tijerina served as both vice president and president of the Houston chapter and later as regional governor. He was also elected president of the national organization for four terms, from 1956 to 1960.

Under his leadership LULAC sponsored the Little Schools of the 400, a preschool instruction program that later became the model for the federal Head Start program.
Concerned about the high failure and dropout rates among Spanish-speaking children in elementary schools, Tijerina studied the problem and concluded that the lack of English skills prevented the children from passing and ultimately forced them to drop out of school. If they were taught English before they entered the first grade, however, their chances for succeeding would improve. Tijerina met with state leaders, including Governor Price Daniel, to discuss the problem. A pilot educational program was proposed but not funded. LULAC also failed to come up with the money, and Tijerina provided it. The pilot educational program was established during the summer of 1957 in Ganado, Texas. A local seventeen-year-old student, Isabel Verver, volunteered to teach the children, and Tijerina paid her twenty-five dollars a week. Elizabeth Burrus, a teacher from Baytown, designed the curriculum. Classes were held for a few hours every day for three months. The children were taught 400 simple, basic English words. They were also introduced to the cultural traditions of schools, which later helped them adjust to their new environment. All the children in the pilot program successfully passed the first grade; before this, up to eighty percent of Spanish-speaking children...
failed their first year. The next summer the program was expanded to nine cities, and by this
date LULAC had assumed responsibility for coordinating the program through the LULAC
Educational Fund. Impressed by the program's success, Governor Daniel appointed
Tijerina to the twenty-four-member Hale-Aiken Committee, which made recommendations
on revising the state's education laws. The committee recommended the adoption of the
Little Schools project, and in May 1959 the legislature passed a bill that established a state-
financed preschool instruction program for Hispanic children. State funding was to be used
solely for education, not promotion, so LULAC assumed responsibility for publicizing the
program. With some corporate funding, the organization published posters and leaflets to
circulate around the state, and advertised in newspapers and on radio and television. They
enlisted the aid of the Boy Scouts in distributing informational material. LULAC also hired
supervisors throughout the state to estimate the number of eligible children in a district and
to work with school superintendents to set up programs and apply for state funds. By June
1, 1960, 614 schools were teaching 15,805 Spanish-speaking children. The program
continued to grow in importance until the mid-1960s, when federal programs superseded it.

In 1954 Tijerina traveled to Mexico to persuade Mexican film star Cantinflas to appear at a
Houston benefit; on his return immigration authorities arrested him for not having the
proper documentation. The arrest came at a
time when he was being considered to serve on
the Houston Grand Jury. Tijerina filed a lawsuit
for declaratory judgment that he was a native-
born citizen of the United States, and in 1956
United States district judge Joe Ingraham ruled
in his favor. Tijerina served as a mess sergeant at
Ellington Air Force Base (see ELLINGTON
FIELD) during World War II. He was an officer
and director of Security Savings Association and
a director of the Central National Bank. He
served as president of the Club Cultural
Recreativo México Bello, and was a member of
the Houston Rotary, Optimist, and Variety
clubs. For seven years he served as chairman of
the Latin-American citizens' committee to study
juvenile delinquency. In 1962 the Mexican
government awarded him a gold medal for his
Little Schools program. At the time of his death he was chairman of the Houston Housing Authority. Tijerina died at his home in Houston on September 4, 1965, of heart disease. He was survived by his wife and their two adopted children. He owned seven restaurants in Houston, Pasadena, and Beaumont. When asked for advice on how to succeed in the United States, his usual response was: "Work hard, help yourself, help others, be a good citizen, take an active part in community affairs, and attend a church of your choice regularly." A Tijerina Foundation Scholarship was established in his memory.

William Marsh Rice, merchant, financier, and philanthropist, was born at Springfield, Massachusetts, on March 14, 1816, the son of David and Patty (Hall) Rice. He was named William Marsh for the circuit rider who organized his family's church in 1815. He left school at the age of fifteen to begin business life as a general store clerk, and at twenty-one purchased an enterprise of his own. After the panic of 1837 Rice moved to Houston, Texas, where he contracted to furnish and serve liquor in the bar of the Milam Hotel in return for the cost of the liquor, three dollars a day, and board. He was issued a headright certificate to 320 acres of Houston land and soon received a first-class license for a mercantile business from the city on June 28, 1840. He was associated with a number of partners, and with Ebenezar B. Nichols was a senior partner in the mercantile firm of Rice and Nichols, a large export and import business that supplied plantations and settlers inland with goods from New Orleans and New York and acted as banker for many of its customers; by 1856 the business was known as William Rice and Company. In 1841 Rice offered a gold cup to the planter who brought in the first twenty bales of cotton and a silver cup for the first five. In 1851 he and other investors established the Houston and Galveston Navigation Company, and by 1858 he was the owner of a brig called the William M. Rice, which carried ice from Boston to Galveston during the summers. Rice also served as a director of the Houston Insurance Company, which insured carriers and freight. These enterprises, with others, enabled him to amass thousands of acres in Texas and Louisiana, along with a considerable fortune. Among his landholdings was a large farm on the outskirts of Houston, near Bellaire. In 1859, with other investors, Rice
incorporated the Houston Cotton Compress Company. He was also an incorporator and director of several railroads, including the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado, the Houston Tap and Brazoria, the Washington County, and the Houston and Texas Central, as well as a stage line from Houston to Austin. Rice represented the Second Ward as an alderman from 1855 to 1857 and served on the petit jury and grand jury in Harris County. By 1860 he may have been the second richest man in Texas, with real estate and personal property valued at $750,000.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he left his home to be used as a military hospital and transferred his business to Matamoros, where he operated through the federal blockade. Though he was a slaveowner with fifteen slaves in 1860 and served on the slave patrol for a year, he identified with the Unionist cause. After the war he moved to Dunellen, New Jersey, where he was an agent for the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, which he had helped to promote. Rice retained his interest in Texas, however, for in 1885 he bought the Capitol Hotel, which became the Rice Hotel, and in 1891 he endowed and incorporated the William Marsh Rice Institute for the advancement of literature, science, and art. Rice married Margaret C. Bremond on June 29, 1850. After her death in

Lovett Hall at Rice University. Courtesy of Rice University.
1863, he married Julia Elizabeth (Baldwin) Brown, on June 26, 1867. Rice had accumulated a fortune of about $3 million when he moved to New York City after the death of his second wife on July 24, 1896. There, on September 23, 1900, he was murdered by Charles F. Jones, his valet, and Albert T. Patrick, a lawyer who made a series of forgeries in order to acquire the Rice estate. Years of litigation ensued and, though Patrick was sentenced to death, he received a full pardon in 1912, when the bulk of the estate went to Rice Institute. Rice was an Odd Fellow, a Mason, and an Episcopalian. He was a director of the Houston Academy and a trustee of the Houston Educational Society, the Second Ward School, and the Texas Medical College. His ashes are buried under John Angel's statue of him on the Rice University campus in Houston.
Part II: Business and Economy

“The Great Interior Commercial Emporium”

“When the rich lands of this country shall be settled, a trade will flow to it, making it, beyond all doubt, the great interior commercial emporium of Texas.” – Advertisement for Houston in Telegraph on August 30, 1836.

One can almost envision John and Augustus Allen on the verge of an ecstatic trance as they crafted these poetic words for their advertisement for their new city in the August 30, 1836, Telegraph. Perhaps time contracted and the ambitious brothers got a small glimpse into the future of their nascent settlement: today, Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States with a sprawling metropolitan population of more than six million people. Our economic base is spread primarily across four sectors: energy, manufacturing, aeronautics, and transportation.

Based on our reputation as the Energy Capital of the World, one might think that Houston’s economic heart was birthed pumping oil through its chambers. Here, however, you will read about the other industries that helped build our city. Small businesses, like Star Bottling Works, were vital to the city’s growth. By the twentieth century, medicine and aeronautics joined the ever-growing plethora of sectors, immensely important both to the areas past as well as the present.
Part II: Business and Economy

“The Great Interior Commercial Emporium”

Houston has always been a city of colorful characters. You’ll meet a few of them here – movers, shakers, entrepreneurs, and visionaries Maria “Mama Ninfa” Laurenzo, Joseph Wood Evans, and Bernard Sakowitz – in this small appetizer of stories demonstrating how inventive, resourceful minds have created their own opportunities here in Houston. Start your exploration here, and then dive into the tremendous catalog of stories waiting for you in the Handbook of Houston on the Texas State Historical Association’s Handbook of Texas Online.

The Allens certainly were eerily prescient about Houston’s economic future, but they were off a bit about the climate… later in that same Telegraph ad, they claim that there is “no place in Texas more healthy, having an abundance of excellent spring water, and enjoying the sea breeze in all its freshness…. ” They somehow forget to mention the mosquitos and humidity, but of course, no one is perfect!

- Cecelia Ottenweller
The modern-day **soft-drink industry**, with the familiar brands of Coca-Cola, **Dr Pepper**, and Pepsi, can trace its beginnings to the post-*Civil War* nineteenth century. Star Bottling Works is Houston's contribution to the story of soft drinks.

The Star Bottling Works opened at the corner of Congress Avenue and Fannin Street in 1880. The proprietor, druggist Robert Cotter, had come to Texas from his native England in the late 1860s. Cotter was associated with Houston druggist Matthias D. Conklin, who worked for R. F. George and Company. Cotter took over the George pharmacy (located at 76 Main Street) and started the R. Cotter and Company in 1870. By 1879 Cotter, with his partner Matthias Conklin, sold an assortment of medicinal treatments of their own making, including such products as IXL Chill Cure, IXL Sarsaparilla, and IXL Liver Pills, in addition to items for sale, including Pure Extract Jamaica Ginger and Triumph Mexican Chewing Gum. With the bottling company, Cotter also branched out into drinks such as soda, ginger ale, and sarsaparilla (or “sasparilla,” as it was called in the “Old West”).

W. D. Cleveland, a local grocer, took an interest in the start-up beverage enterprise and became president of Star Bottling Works in 1882. Robert Cotter served as vice president and general manager of manufacturing operations. However, within two years Houston contractor August Baumbach acquired the company. In 1884 the Star...
Bottling Works moved into its new factory on the northwest corner of Commerce Avenue and San Jacinto Street with the intent to become Houston’s premier soft drink bottling company. In the June 8, 1884, edition of the *Galveston Daily News*, the Star Bottling Works announced that it was in “full blast and prepared to execute all orders for Soda Water, Sarsaparilla, Belfast Ginger Ale, Essences of Peppermint and Ginger: Vichy. Seltzer, and Syrups of all flavors.”

Baumbach, born in Hamburg, Germany, about 1852, immigrated to the United States in 1871 and arrived in Houston about 1878. He worked as a brick mason but eventually established himself as a general contractor by the time he acquired the Star Bottling Works. Baumbach supervised the building of brick structures in Houston and throughout Texas, including the construction of the Chambers County Courthouse in Wallisville and the Falls County Courthouse in Marlin (both in 1886). His projects also included a brick assembly hall at the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College (1889) as well as an addition to the truck house of the fire department on the corner of Prairie Avenue and San Jacinto Street in Houston (1894).

At the time that Star Bottling Works went “full blast” in its operations, the soft-drink industry was making significant advances in emerging as a viable competitive business and presenting consumers a variety of new products. Pharmacist Charles Alderton invented Dr Pepper in Waco in 1885. Coca-Cola, invented by John Pemberton, was first sold to the public in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1886. The efforts of local bottlers to introduce new beverages inspired fierce competition. In the case of Houston’s Star Bottling Works, the drive to push more products resulted in a lawsuit by the Moxie Nerve Food Company of Maine. In February 1887 Moxie Nerve Food Company filed a bill of injunction against August Baumbach and the Star Bottling Works in the U. S. Circuit Court. The Maine company alleged that Star Bottling was fraudulently manufacturing a beverage similar to their product. Moxie claimed that Baumbach’s beverage, called “Standard Nerve Food,” used similar ingredients contained in a similar bottle, with a
similar label and packing, that infringed upon their trademarked drink. On July 11, 1887, in a landmark case, the court ordered Baumbach and Star Bottling Works to cease the trademark infringement against the Moxie Nerve Food Company.

Despite this setback, Star Bottling Works continued its operations. At the same time, Baumbach was still a general contractor and managing both businesses from his office in the Star Bottling Works factory on Commerce Avenue. Two years later, however, in 1889, he transferred management of the bottling company to August Bonner.

Bonner, an Italian immigrant, had arrived in Houston about 1878 and worked as a bartender until he opened his own establishment, the First and Last Chance Saloon, on Milam Street in 1880. He was first employed with Star Bottling about 1886 and by 1889 had worked his way up to management of the company. In 1890 he became a partner with Baumbach in Star Bottling. August Bonner became the sole proprietor of the Star Bottling Works in 1892 as the company expanded its business. He continued to run the Star Bottling Works at the same location (designated as 1117–1119 Commerce Avenue in the new street numbering system of 1892) until his death on August 20, 1896. Bonner took a lethal dose of morphine and died at his boarding house.

In early 1897 Henry H. Kuhlman bought the Star Bottling Works from the Bonner estate. In 1900 Kuhlman moved the plant across the street to 1216–1220 Commerce Avenue. The company was subsequently sold to G. Geaccone about 1902, and the Star Bottling Works was moved to 20 NE Crawford Avenue at the corner of Magnolia Street in 1903. Geaccone relocated the factory again (to 1102 Wood Street at corner of Vine Street) in 1908 and sold the company to Joseph R. Navarro, an Italian immigrant, in 1910. Navarro, with his partner M. Lamana, increased the product line to include Mignon Limon splits as well as the soda fountain syrup Jersey Creme, from the Jersey Creme Company of Fort Worth.

In 1915 the Star Bottling Works, which promoted itself as the “Oldest Manufacturers of Soda Water in Houston,” moved to a new facility at 1010 N. San Jacinto Street. Joseph
Navarro ran the company at this location until his tragic death on June 23, 1932, when an armed assailant shot Navarro at his home while he, his wife, and daughter sat on the front porch. His son Roxie Navarro, the bookkeeper for the company, became the proprietor and manager of Star Bottling Works until it closed in 1962.

Advertisement Featuring Star Bottling Works Delivery Trucks. Houston Post, June 6, 1918.
Joseph Wood Evans, cotton broker and civic leader, was born in Augusta, Kentucky, on October 17, 1877, son of Joseph Madison and Alice (Humphreys) Wood. After graduation from Hanover College in Madison, Indiana, and military service in the Spanish-American War, he moved to Houston, Texas, in 1901. He was married to Emily Scott on October 31, 1906; they had two daughters. He entered the cotton brokerage business and in 1908 organized a major cotton-exporting firm, Evans and Company. He was elected president of the Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade in 1918, and in 1922 Evans helped choose the location for the new Cotton Exchange Building at the corner of Prairie and Caroline.

In his determination to bring Texas cotton producers improved transportation facilities, he took a key role in the development of Houston as a deepwater port. He served as chairman of the Houston Ship Channel Navigation Commission in Harris County from 1930 to 1945, when he resigned due to poor health; during his tenure shipping tonnage doubled, and the port of Houston rose to third place in total tonnage and first place in cotton tonnage among the nation’s deepwater ports.

Evans was chairman of the Houston War Work campaign and an official of the state Red Cross during World War I. Later he helped organize the Houston Community Chest and served on the state executive committee of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. He was president of the Houston Chamber of Commerce in 1928. He was elected a director of the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1933 and named a vice president of that organization in 1935.
Evans was a trustee of Hanover College; in 1938 he was a member of the original building-fund campaign committee for the University of Houston. In recognition of his keen interest in higher education, after his death his widow and daughter, Alice Pratt, donated a substantial sum in his memory for the establishment of the Joseph W. Evans Collection of bibliographical references at the M. D. Anderson Library, University of Houston. Evans died in Houston on November 13, 1962, and is buried in Glenwood Cemetery.
The Institute was open from September 2, 1986, to December 11, 1987. The partnership between an academic program and a for-profit facility was unique but became a major factor in the institute’s demise. IID’s brief period of operation was due in part to a number of complex problems, including politics and controversy surrounding the AIDS epidemic, but one of the most pressing issues was money. AMI expected a large amount of patients diagnosed with AIDS to be sent to IID over other area hospitals and that the profits gained from IID would be akin to a full hospital of AIDS patients undergoing treatment. In reality, IID functioned primarily as an outpatient facility, which significantly limited its profit margin. During its operation, the Institute treated approximately 750 patients.

Located in Houston, Texas, the Institute for Immunological Disorders was the first hospital in the nation dedicated exclusively to the treatment and study of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Formed through a partnership of the University of Texas M. D. Anderson Hospital (MDAH) and the for-profit hospital network of American Medical International, Inc. (AMI), the Institute for Immunological Disorders (IID) was designed to fill a gap in AIDS research by providing a large, centralized patient population and facilities to study pharmaceutical and other types of treatments for the disease. The research and care of the patients was the purview of University of Texas medical staff, while building maintenance and support staff were supplied by AMI.
MDAH and AMI formed the Institute for Immunological Disorders in 1986. MDAH had been treating AIDS patients for several years by then; the first case of AIDS in Houston was discovered in 1981. Many AIDS patients were initially treated at M. D. Anderson’s Cancer Center because they showed symptoms of Kaposi’s Sarcoma, a very rare type of cancer. To address the growing epidemic, MDAH created an AIDS program in 1982. Its director was Dr. Peter Mansell, who, in his former position as associate director of cancer prevention at MDAH, was among the first medical personnel to encounter AIDS in Houston. From 1982 to 1986 the MDAH AIDS program saw more than 1,000 referrals. AIDS patients overwhelmed the intensive care unit at MDAH and spilled over into regular hospital rooms. MDAH needed greater space and funds in order to more effectively treat AIDS patients.

In 1985 the for-profit hospital network American Medical International, Inc., approached the University of Texas Medical System, which oversaw MDAH, with an offer for a partnership. AMI had plans for a medical facility focused exclusively on AIDS, which had been presented to them earlier that year by Dan Moreschi, director of nursing at AMI’s Katy Community Hospital. The plan, written by Moreschi and Ted R. Hewes, a Houston psychotherapist who worked with AIDS victims, described a facility focused on both care and on-site research. The intent was for patients to receive the most effective treatments for AIDS as soon as those treatments were discovered. At this time, AMI had already seen profits from the care of AIDS patients in their hospitals and was eager to explore Moreschi’s and Hewes’s idea. The kind of facility detailed in the plans, one focused on cutting-edge research and treatment for AIDS, required access to experimental drugs only available to academic institutions. This necessitated AMI’s partnership with University of Texas. Despite the expectation of an expensive initial investment, AMI anticipated no difficulty in recouping costs and turning a profit, while simultaneously elevating their company profile as the one of first health care corporations to respond to the AIDS crisis.
Negotiations over the terms of the partnership between AMI and the University of Texas took just over a year. AMI agreed to supply the building, facilities, and support staff, including Moreschi. MDAH would supply the medical and research staff, as well as access to experimental drugs. During the negotiations, MDAH’s AIDS program applied for and won a $5.8 million contract from the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to conduct research and provide treatment to AIDS patients. Under the grant agreement, MDAH’s AIDS clinic would move to a separate hospital complex dedicated solely to the AIDS program. The grant did not cover the costs of facilities and non-medical personnel, which further necessitated the partnership between MDAH and AMI. With the NIAID grant and AMI’s support, MDAH had the resources to expand their AIDS clinic and move forward with continuing AIDS research. The result of these combined resources was the establishment of the Institute of Immunological Disorders (IID).

IID opened in September 1986 at 7407 North Freeway in the Acres Homes community in Houston. Its operations were housed in the former Citizens General Hospital, a medical complex owned by AMI and renovated for the use of IID. The location sparked controversy; residents of Acres Homes were fearful of the presence of an AIDS hospital in their area, and IID was approximately fifteen miles away from Montrose, the community hit hardest by the AIDS outbreak. Mansell was appointed to be IID’s medical director and worked alongside Moreschi, who was appointed by AMI to be director of development. AIDS research was headed by Dr. Adan Rios, director of clinical research, and overseen in the laboratory by Dr. Jose Trujillo. In addition to doctors of traditional medicine, MDAH formed a social services department at IID to address patients’ mental and psychological wellbeing; this department was directed by Sue Cooper.
In order to develop a large pool of patients for clinical trials and per the philosophy of MDAH, all patients were accepted at IID regardless of their ability to pay for treatment. MDAH preferred to provide care on an outpatient basis unless it was medically necessary to admit a patient to a hospital room. Due in part to this practice, the ICU at the Institute was never used. Mansell and Sue Cooper organized a team that included physicians, nurses, nutritionists, physical therapists, and psychologists to treat AIDS patients at home until death.

The IID model of treatment led to financial losses for AMI early in its operation. AMI’s expectations for profits were based on average costs for in-house treatment of AIDS patients over an extended hospital stay, possibly for the remainder of the patients’ lives. (With no cure or effective treatment method for AIDS victims in the late 1980s, diagnosis with the disease was usually a death sentence.) IID focused on outpatient care when possible, which cost significantly less than in-house treatment. AMI’s finances were also strained by the number of indigent patients that came to IID for care; about half of IID’s patients were impoverished. Some IID staff suspected that doctors at other hospitals accepted only AIDS patients with insurance and sent the poor to IID or waited until patients ran out of money to then “dump” them on IID. By mid-March 1987 AMI had spent $2.5 million on indigent care, when they had budgeted $250,000 for the entire year. Stipulations in grant funding contracts did not give express permission for AMI to use grant rewards to cover any of the general operating expenses (indirect costs) of IID.

Due to financial strains, AMI announced in March 1987 that no more indigent patients would be enrolled into care at IID; one month later, AMI laid off twenty-six IID employees. In August AMI announced the impending closure of the Institute and cited operating losses of more than $8 million among the causes. Mansell and his team attempted to move to a different facility in order to continue AIDS research and treatment, but no other medical complexes were interested in providing the necessary space for patients and staff. Without a physical location, Mansell’s team was not able to guarantee the required number of patients needed to conduct drug trials. Since research and clinical trials could not continue, more than $4 million in grant money was returned to the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases. The 450 patients enrolled in care at IID were referred for treatment to different medical institutions by IID’s Social Services Department. Patients with insurance were sent to private hospitals and physicians; those without were referred to the Harris County Hospital District.
Ninfa’s is a chain of Mexican restaurants founded by Ninfa Laurenzo in 1973. The restaurant is famed for introducing the United States to fajitas. Legacy Restaurants owns the original Ninfa’s on Navigation Boulevard in Houston. In 2010 there were twenty-eight Ninfa’s locations currently licensing the trademark, in addition to the original location.

In 1973 Ninfa Laurenzo opened a small restaurant in the front of the tortilla factory that she had operated with her husband, Domenic Thomas Laurenzo (Tommy), prior to his death in 1969. Unable to secure a loan from a bank, due to the factory’s debts, Laurenzo mortgaged her home and borrowed money from a friend in Mexico to start the ten-table eatery. The restaurant quickly attracted attention for its flavorful green sauce, its “Ninfarita,” and its tacos al carbón (chargrilled beef in a tortilla), introduced as “fajitas.” Patrons also appreciated the friendly service of “Mama” Ninfa. Laurenzo capitalized on Houstonians’ cravings for ethnic food in the 1970s, and her enterprise quickly expanded. In 1976 Laurenzo opened a second restaurant on Westheimer, and two more followed within the next two years. In 1980 the Ninfa’s chain had grown to a total of thirteen restaurants, including one in San Antonio and four locations in Dallas, under the leadership of Ninfa Laurenzo’s oldest son, Roland. They incorporated under Ninfa’s Tacos al Carbón, Inc., with Roland as president and Ninfa Laurenzo as chair.
Rapid expansion in the early 1980s led to a drop in quality in the new locations and increasing debt. In 1985 the overextended company joined with McFaddin Ventures, a nightclub operator, to open new chains in the hope that a partnership would diminish risk. Less than a year later, the partnership dissolved, and McFaddin sued the Laurenzos, while the Laurenzos counter-sued. The two parties settled out of court in 1988. With control of the company back in the hands of the Laurenzos, Roland Laurenzo created RioStar Corporation, a holding company, in 1989. Expanding beyond the Ninfa’s brand, RioStar opened fourteen Italian fast food restaurants (Bambolino’s Italian Drive-Thru), four Cajun restaurants, and a seafood restaurant. By 1996 the company owned thirty-eight restaurants and owed $2.8 million in debt to food and equipment suppliers. That year, RioStar declared bankruptcy. In 1998 Serranos Café and Cantina, an Austin-based company, took over RioStar and continued to operate the Ninfa’s locations. Founder Ninfa Laurenzo died in 2001. Members of the Laurenzo family remained in the food service industry in Houston and owned several El Tiempo restaurants and Laurenzo’s Prime Rib.

Legacy Restaurants bought the original Ninfa’s location on Navigation Boulevard in 2006 and focused on returning the restaurant to its roots and preserving the Ninfa’s heritage. Advertising at Ninfa’s, both in the beginning and through 2016, has revolved around the story and image of Mama Ninfa. Her rags to riches narrative is evident on every menu and public relations piece. The legacy of Ninfa’s on Mexican restaurants can be seen in every menu featuring fajitas, and the Original Ninfa’s on Navigation continues to stand as a Houston institution.
The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, originally known as the Manned Spacecraft Center, is one of ten National Aeronautics and Space Administration field centers and home base for the nation's astronauts. The origins of the center are to be found in the national commitment to a broad program of space exploration, including manned space flight, which the United States made in response to the Soviet Union's successful space launches, begun in 1957. At its complex of more than 100 buildings on a 1,620-acre site twenty-five miles south of downtown Houston, the center houses its facilities for conducting space operations and applied research. In 2015 it employed more than 11,000 workers, including approximately 80 astronauts and about 3,000 federal workers, involved in the design, development and testing of spacecraft for manned space flights; the development and operation of permanently manned space stations; the selection and training of astronauts and other specialists; experimentation; medical research; and propulsion-systems testing at White Sands Test Facilities at Las Cruces, New Mexico. Center customers include NASA, the Department of Defense, and commercial organizations. From its inception through 2015, the center had received more than $150 billion in federal appropriations. In 2015 the center received approximately 25 percent of the total NASA budget and contributed nearly $3 billion to the Houston-area economy.

On October 4, 1957, the U.S.S.R. orbited the first artificial earth satellite, Sputnik I. A month later, Sputnik II, weighing some 1,100 pounds and carrying a dog, went into orbit. These achievements, followed by the explosion at launch of this country's Vanguard rocket, which was designed to orbit a tiny research satellite, shocked the American public. Nine months of debate over national purposes, capabilities, and shortcomings produced the National Aeronautics and Space Act, signed into law by President Dwight D.
Eisenhower on July 29, 1958. The act instituted a new federal agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which absorbed the pioneer National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics as well as space-allocated funds and several space projects from the Department of Defense. NASA was formed to be the focus of the nation's efforts in the space age.

The most publicized aspect of NASA's variegated program was the drive to put a manned satellite into orbit around the earth. The undertaking, established in November 1958 and entitled Project Mercury, was managed by the Space Task Group, composed of former NACA scientists and engineers, with headquarters at NACA's Langley Aeronautical Laboratory, later renamed Langley Research Center, at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. Project Mercury, proceeding under the assumption that the U.S.S.R. had man-in-space intentions, organized civilian, military, industrial, and academic resources to send a man into orbit and recover him. Between 1959 and 1961 Project Mercury, under the Space Task Group, trained seven military test pilots as "astronauts." In May 1961, after the Soviets launched Yuri Gagarin into a one-orbit flight around earth, and after a Mercury space capsule carried Alan B. Shepard on a suborbital flight downrange from Florida into the Atlantic, President John F. Kennedy set as a national goal the achievement of a manned landing on the moon by the end of the decade.

The extension of NASA's jurisdiction to the moon, and perhaps beyond, meant an enormous expansion of its research and development operations. NASA began to reorganize and increase its space establishments to carry to completion Project Mercury, to carry out Project Gemini (which had the mission of perfecting rendezvous and
docking techniques essential to NASA's plans for lunar landing and return), and to carry out Project Apollo, the moonflight program itself. Central to the agency's new future was the construction of a manned-space-development aggregation, including the rocket launch facilities at Cape Canaveral (called Kennedy Space Center), Florida; the Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Alabama; a planned rocket assembly and test plant on the Pearl River in southeastern Mississippi; and a new space-management, crew-training, and flight-control center at a site to be selected. NASA formed a site survey team to investigate the qualifications of twenty prospective locations, from Florida to California. The NASA investigators evaluated each place by definite criteria: proximity of academic institutions with adequate research facilities; availability of water power and other utilities; temperate climate; adequate housing, land, and air and water transportation; and attractive cultural and recreational facilities. On September 19, 1961, Administrator James E. Webb of NASA formally announced that the new Manned Spacecraft Center would be built in southeastern Harris County, Texas, about twenty-five miles from downtown Houston, at the edge of Clear Lake, an inlet of Galveston Bay. Rice University was to transfer a 1,000-acre tract to the federal government for the construction of the center. Civic leaders and congressmen from other states doubted that Houston and environs met all of NASA's official criteria, at least any more than their towns did. They inquired about the roles of Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, chairman of the high-level National Aeronautics and Space Council, and Representative Albert Thomas, also a Democrat and Texan and chairman of
the Independent Offices Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, in the choice of the Harris County site. Webb and other NASA officials denied all charges and suggestions of political influence, pointed to Houston's obvious attractiveness in relation to NASA's criteria, and added that the planned expansion of the Cape Canaveral launch facilities, the establishment of the Michoud Plant on the Pearl River, and proximity to the Marshall Space Flight Center in northern Alabama made the choice appropriate. MSC, Michoud, Marshall, and Cape Canaveral would be integrated into a space-engineering (development) as opposed to a science (research) enterprise.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers then began construction at Clear Lake. The Space Task Group, redesignated the Manned Spacecraft Center, remained in Virginia pending its move into temporary offices in southeastern Houston. Thus it was from the Langley Research Center that John H. Glenn's three-orbit flight in February 1962 and M. Scott Carpenter's duplicate mission the following May were planned and effected. By the time Walter M. Schirra circumnavigated the earth six times in October 1962, the transfer of about 1,000 persons and direction of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo projects to Houston was essentially complete. Construction at Clear Lake continued on schedule, as Project Mercury ended after L. Gordon Cooper's twenty-two-orbit mission in May 1963. In September 1963 the Manned Spacecraft Center opened and assumed formal responsibilities as the Mission Control Center for human space flights beginning with Gemini 4 in June 1964. In October 1966 the MSC had a workforce of more than 5,000 housed in some fifteen functional structures located on 1,620 acres. Dominating the landscape was the nine-story project-management building, where the MSC hierarchy and many of the center's Gemini and Apollo engineering staffs had offices. Nearby were computer buildings, spacecraft-environment chambers, and astronaut-training facilities, including a large centrifuge. When flight missions are in progress, attention focuses on the Mission Control Center, where, once a spacecraft is launched, mission direction is assumed and maintained until the astronauts successfully reenter the earth's atmosphere.
In preparation for an Apollo spacecraft to carry three astronauts to the surface of the moon, the Apollo 7 spacecraft was launched from Cape Kennedy, Florida, on October 12, 1968, and completed an eleven-day, three-man, 163-orbit mission. This was a successful test of the three-man spacecraft that had been modified after a fire killed three astronauts, Roger B. Chaffee, Virgil I. Grissom, and Edward H. White, on the launching pad at Cape Kennedy in January 1967. Soon after the successful Apollo 7 mission, Apollo 8, Apollo 9, and Apollo 10 were launched in final preparation for the projected lunar landing. These flights were all successful. Apollo 8 was launched in December 1968 with astronauts Frank Borman, William Anders, and James Lovell aboard. This was the first time human beings saw the hidden side of the moon and left the earth's orbital influence. The flight was significant in its successful moon orbit, preparatory to the moon-landing flight. Apollo 9 was the first mission to take the lunar-landing module into space. After launch on March 3, 1969, the three-man crew, James A. McDivitt, David R. Scott, and Russell L. Schweickart, spent approximately ten days in earth orbit testing docking maneuvers with the lunar-landing module that would be used in the moon mission. On May 19, 1969, Apollo 10, carrying astronauts Thomas P. Stafford, John Young, and Eugene Cernan, was launched into what NASA officials called a dress rehearsal for the moon landing. Landing sites on the moon were examined, the lunar module was tested in lunar orbit, and most of the maneuvers and checks necessary in the moon landing were rehearsed.

The objective of landing a man on the moon in the 1960s was realized when Apollo 11 was launched on July 16, 1969, with Neil A. Armstrong, Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr., and Michael Collins aboard. On July 20, 1969, Armstrong made his historic walk as the first man on the moon; Aldrin was the second. The moon walk received worldwide television coverage; some claimed that one out of every four people on earth witnessed some part of the Apollo 11 moon flight. The Apollo crew conducted various scientific experiments on the moon's surface and set up several instruments for continual relaying of information back to NASA installations on earth. The astronauts brought back samples of lunar material when they returned on July 24, 1969. The next flight to the
Neil Armstrong (left), Michael Collins (center), and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin (left) of the Apollo 11 Mission. Courtesy of NASA.

moon, Apollo 12, was struck by lightning during launch on November 14, 1969 and was almost aborted. Apollo 12 repeated its predecessor's journey and demonstrated the ability to land at a preselected point on the moon. Charles Conrad, Jr., Richard F. Gordon, Jr., and Alan L. Bean (a native Texan) were the second United States crew to go to the moon; during two extravehicular activities, Conrad and Bean became the third and fourth men to walk on the lunar surface. On April 11, 1970, the Apollo 13 mission, designed to follow Apollo 11 and Apollo 12 in format, was launched. However, before the crew, consisting of Fred W. Haise, Jr., James A. Lovell, Jr., and John L. Swigert, Jr., reached the moon's orbit, a liquid oxygen tank exploded, blowing a hole in the service module. The explosion knocked out most of the command ship's cooling, oxygen, and electrical systems and made completion of the moon landing impossible. Using the lunar module as a "lifeboat," the astronauts flew around the moon and then returned safely to the earth on April 17, 1970, in their crippled command module. They landed with just fifteen minutes of power to spare. Despite the Apollo 13 failure, Apollo 14 was launched on
January 31, 1971, with astronauts Alan B. Shepard, Edgar D. Mitchell—the fifth and sixth men to walk on the moon—and Stuart A. Roosa. The Apollo 14 flight coincided with the thirteenth anniversary of the American entry into the space age. On January 31, 1958, a Jupiter C rocket had put the Explorer I satellite into orbit. The anniversary was perhaps significant due to the fact that during 1971 the future of the United States program was questioned and threatened by critics. Thousands of people employed by the NASA complex and hundreds of support industries connected with the space program sought reaffirmation of United States space goals. The fourth lunar landing mission, Apollo 15, launched on July 26, 1971, completed the first Lunar Rover vehicle test, returned with lunar samples, and launched a subsatellite from lunar orbit. Apollo 16, launched April 16, 1972, spent a longer period on the lunar surface and collected 213 pounds of samples, while its command module carried out lunar mapping and other scientific tests. Apollo 17, begun on December 7, 1972, with the first night launch, carried the first scientist-astronaut, geologist Harrison Schmitt, on its crew and returned after three lunar surface excursions with unique soil samples, including orange glass beads.

On August 17, 1973, the Manned Spacecraft Center was officially renamed the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center. Over the succeeding years, housing developments, apartment projects, motels, and shopping centers were built on previously open prairies in the Clear Lake area, and millions of dollars and thousands of people arrived on the upper Texas coast.

The Skylab program, which comprised the first United States space-station missions, made four launches beginning on May 14, 1973, with the placement of an unmanned workshop into earth orbit by a two-stage Saturn V rocket. Skylab served as a laboratory, observation station, and home for three astronaut crews. A meteoroid shield problem that developed during the launch was solved with the design of a "solar parasol" to cover the workshop, and the first repair mission in space was carried out by the astronaut team,
who remained on board for twenty-eight days. The second crew, launched on July 28, 1973, conducted observations of the earth and medical, astrophysical, and flight experiments for nearly two months in orbit. The third crew, launched on November 16, 1973, set an orbital record of more than eighty-four days and conducted extensive observation and photography of Comet Kohoutek. After more than six years in orbit, Skylab reentered the earth's atmosphere on July 11, 1979. Altogether nine Skylab astronauts spent a total of 171 days in space.

The first international space mission, the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project, began as a cooperative venture between the United States and the Soviet Union. The project tested an international docking system and joint space-flight procedures, but is remembered most for the first space handshake between crews from different nations. The Soviet Soyuz spacecraft carrying cosmonauts Alexei Leonov and Valery Kubasov and the Apollo spacecraft with astronauts Thomas P. Stafford, Vance D. Brand, and Donald K. "Deke" Slayton were launched 7½ hours apart on July 15, 1975, and docked on July 17. In addition to rendezvous, docking, crew transfer, and joint control center-crew operations, the crews gave televised tours of their spacecraft and performed joint solar eclipse experiments.

The Johnson Space Center designed, developed, produced, and tested its first shuttle, Enterprise, after the project was approved by President Richard M. Nixon on January 5, 1972. Winged space shuttles, like airplanes, could reenter from space and land on runways instead of hitting the ocean and could serve not only as launch vehicles,
but as science laboratories, earth-observation outposts, and repair and retrieval stations for satellites. On April 12, 1981, the shuttle *Columbia* was first launched into space on a test flight carrying John W. Young and Robert L. Crippen. The launch saw many firsts for the manned-space-flight program. It was the first space flight of the space shuttle system and the first to use solid rocket boosters. The *Columbia* was also was the first orbiter that, with its three main engines, could be refurbished and reused. *Columbia*'s second crew, launched on November 12, 1981, cut short its mission when trouble developed with one of the craft's three fuel cells. Nonetheless, the crew tested a Canadian-built remote manipulator system with a giant robotic arm designed to deploy and retrieve satellites. On April 4, 1983, *Challenger* set out with a four-member crew, including Donald H. Peterson and F. Story Musgrave, that completed the first shuttle spacewalk. Other orbiters, *Discovery*, *Atlantis*, and *Endeavour*, were added to the shuttle fleet between 1984 and 1992. The shuttle program involved not only experienced military pilots but also scientists and technical specialists from a variety of backgrounds. On June 18, 1983, mission specialist Sally K. Ride, a physicist, became the first American woman to fly in space. The third *Challenger* flight carried Guion S. Bluford, Jr., the first black astronaut to reach orbit, and William E. Thornton, at that time the oldest astronaut (fifty-four years old; subsequently, Vance Brand, age fifty-nine, surpassed Thornton's age on the STS-35 mission in December 1992). The STS-8 launch occurred on August 30, 1983.

The *Columbia* STS-9 Spacelab mission, launched on November 28, 1983, put into orbit a scientific workshop built by the European Space Agency to enable scientists and astronauts to conduct experiments in space and carried the first non-American to fly on a United States spacecraft, Ulf Merbold, a German physicist. On the STS-41B mission (February 7, 1984), astronaut Bruce McCandless II tested a Manned Maneuvering Unit backpack and became the first free-orbiting human satellite of the earth. His crewmate,
Robert L. Stewart, made extravehicular repairs on satellites that led to the shuttle's ability to make "service calls" in space. The *Challenger* STS-41C launch of April 6, 1984, effected the first space rescue of a failed satellite, a disabled Solar Max that had been drifting for three years, which astronauts retrieved, repaired, and re-launched. The first flight to include seven crew members began on October 5, 1984. On this flight Kathryn D. Sullivan became the first American woman to walk in space. The flight included the first Canadian astronaut, Marc Garneau, and demonstrated the first in-orbit refueling to extend a satellite's life. The *Discovery* STS-51A mission of November 8, 1984, retrieved two disabled satellites, and *Discovery's* mission of April 12, 1985, included Senator E. J. "Jake" Garn (R-Utah), chairman of the Senate committee with oversight for NASA's budget, the first elected official to fly in space. House of Representatives member Bill Nelson (D-FL) flew aboard the *Columbia* on January 12, 1986. In 1985, missions focused on life and material-sciences experiments, and West Germany financed and operated a Spacelab mission.

On January 28, 1986, a leak in a solid rocket booster seal caused the shuttle *Challenger* to explode shortly after liftoff. All the crew died—Francis R. Scobee, Michael J. Smith, Judith A. Resnik, Ellison Onizuka, and Ronald McNair, as well as Gregory B. Jarvis of Hughes Aircraft and S. Christa McAuliffe, a New Hampshire school teacher who was to be the first passenger-observer in the United States space program and the first "teacher-in-space."

After being grounded for thirty-two months, astronauts reentered space on September 29, 1988, as part of a *Discovery* mission, and subsequent shuttle launches carried major interplanetary and astronomical payloads. *Atlantis* launched the Magellan spacecraft to Venus in May 1989, and Galileo began a six-year journey to orbit Jupiter in October 1989. The Hubble Space Telescope was deployed by *Discovery* in April 1990, and a second Great Observatory, the Gamma Ray Observatory, was launched by *Atlantis* in 1991 to make images of objects at high energy wavelengths. *Endeavour's* maiden voyage in May 1992 demonstrated the flexibility of shuttle astronauts and ground controllers to handle real-time problems. After three
unsuccessful attempts at retrieving a stranded Intelsat satellite, astronauts Pierre Thout, Rick Hieb and Tom Akers improvised the first three-man spacewalk and successfully captured the satellite by hand. The spacecraft's next voyage carried Spacelab J, the first joint United States and Japanese space-shuttle mission, with the first Japanese citizen, Mamoru Mohri, to fly on a shuttle, the first black woman in space, Mae C. Jemison, and the first married couple on a mission. By 1993, when Ellen Ochoa on *Discovery* became the first Hispanic woman in space, the space shuttle fleet had launched fifty-four successful missions, traveled more than 130 million statute miles, and flown 161 individuals in space, including sixteen non-United States astronauts from ten countries.

In 1984 President Ronald Reagan committed the nation to develop a permanently staffed space station within a decade, and in September 1988 a formal international agreement was reached among Japan, Canada, and ten European Space Agency members to participate in the Space Station *Freedom* program. Space Station *Freedom* experienced several budget cuts, cost overruns, delays, and redesigns in the ensuing years, and funding for the entire program was nearly discontinued by Congress in 1993. To achieve cost savings, President William J. Clinton ordered the station redesigned and management streamlined. Johnson Space Center became the host center for the new Space Station Program Office, and Boeing Defense and Space Group was selected as the single prime contractor. The end of the Cold War also presented new opportunities for the project to evolve. From 1991 to 1993, a series of cooperative agreements were reached for joint United States-Russian space activities, including Russian participation in the building of the proposed space station. As a result, plans for Space Station *Freedom*, which included modules built by the U.S., Japan, and the European Space Agency, were combined with Russian plans for their *Mir*-2 space station to create the framework for a new international venture. The original partner agencies of Space Station *Freedom* signed off on the invitation to Russia, and a renegotiated agreement was eventually reached on January 29, 1998, to establish the International Space Station (ISS) program.

Ellen Ochoa. Courtesy of NASA.
The renewed sense of cooperation between Cold War-era foes also resulted in the establishment of the U.S.-Russia Programs Office at the Johnson Space Center in 1992. To build the collaborative groundwork necessary for the future construction and operation of the ISS, the center initiated the joint Shuttle—Mir program, which ran from 1994 to 1998. During the program, eleven space shuttle flights were conducted, and American astronauts spent seven long-term residencies aboard Mir. In the process, American astronauts gained invaluable experience in multi-national crew and cargo exchanges, long-duration space flights, and space station module assembly. Collaborative scientific experimentation aboard Mir and ongoing preparations for the construction of the International Space Station also shifted focus away from the Spacelab program, which was gradually phased out. Despite serious concerns about safety issues aboard Mir, including a fire and accidental collision with a Russian resupply craft in 1997, the Shuttle—Mir program was largely considered a success. After fifteen years in orbit, Mir was deorbited in 2001.
Assembly of the ISS began in November 1998, with the launch of the Russian Zarya module. A NASA shuttle mission, STS-88, arrived two weeks later to connect the U.S.-built Unity module to Zarya. A third module, the Russian-built Zvezda, was added in July 2000 and the first crew, Expedition 1, arrived in November 2000, beginning an uninterrupted human presence aboard the station that continues as of March 2017. Construction of the ISS was eventually completed in 2011. In total, the project required 161 spacewalks and over 1,000 hours of assembly time. Upon completion, the ISS covered the length of a football field, amassed more than 390 metric tons, and provided more livable space than a conventional five-bedroom home, with two bathrooms, a gymnasium, and ample space for crews to conduct research experiments. As of October 2015, the station had hosted 220 visitors and spacecraft from four different countries, with plans to continue operation until at least 2020.

The Shuttle—Mir and ISS programs also necessitated a significant overhaul and improvement of the training and research facilities at the Johnson Space Center. In 1995, construction began on the Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory, a 6.2 million gallon pool capable of accommodating full-scale mock-ups of ISS modules. The new facility allowed for crews to practice the various tasks necessary for ISS assembly in a simulated weightless environment. Also in 1995, construction began on an addition to the center's historic Mission Control Center, with updated technology and new flight control rooms outfitted to oversee all aspects of space station operations. Johnson Space Center engineers also designed and developed a number of new technologies geared toward ISS construction and operation, including the Simplified Aid for EVA Rescue (SAFER) propulsion system and the X-38 Crew Return Vehicle (discontinued in 2002).

On February 3, 2003, the shuttle Columbia disintegrated during reentry (see SPACE SHUTTLE COLUMBIA CRASH). Tragically, all seven crews members—Rick D. Husband, William C. McCool, Michael P. Anderson, Ilan Ramon, Kalpana Chawla, David M. Brown, and Laurel Blair Salton Clark—were killed, and space shuttle flight operations...
were grounded for more than two years. After a six month investigation it was determined that a piece of foam insulation, shed from one of the shuttle's external tanks during launch, had damaged the orbiter's left wing. In the wake of the disaster, President George W. Bush announced his "Vision for Space Exploration" in January 2004. The plan called for the completion of the ISS, the development of a replacement for the aging shuttle program, and a return to the moon by 2020, with the eventual goal of sending a manned mission to Mars. To accomplish this, NASA initiated the Constellation program in 2005, with the Johnson Space Center again acting as the lead center.

The center's primary contribution to the Constellation program was the design and development of the Crew Exploration Vehicle (now known as the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle), an Apollo-like spacecraft designed to carry an enlarged crew beyond low-Earth orbit and into deep space. Johnson Space Center engineers also began developing new robotics technologies, conceptual designs for a new lunar lander, and research into the effects of long-duration, deep-space flight on human crew members. However, Constellation was discontinued in 2010 after President Barack Obama announced a policy shift that emphasized the development of commercial manned space flight. As a result of the new policy, the shuttle program officially ended with the safe return of the shuttle Atlantis on July 11, 2011, and with no immediate plans for a government-funded shuttle replacement. The end of the shuttle and Constellation programs, coupled with sustained budget cuts, lead to substantial downsizing of the center's workforce, as well as the demolition and consolidation of some of the on-site facilities. Subsequently, the center pivoted towards the development of strategic partnerships with emerging technology companies. Although the center continues its work on the development of the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, the operation of the International Space Station, and research into the possibilities of human deep-space travel, it also serves a pivotal role in coordinating with private companies such as SpaceX and Orbital ATK to engineer the next generation of space transportation. This work resulted in the first successful resupply mission to the ISS by a privately-developed spacecraft, the SpaceX Dragon, in October 2012.
The Space Center Houston visitor center, designed with the help of Walt Disney Imagineering, opened in 1992. Visitors can tour Mission Control and astronaut-training facilities at the Johnson Space Center, view historical spacecraft and displays, watch several movies including IMAX and 4K film shot in space, and explore a museum of the American space program. Space Center Houston is owned and operated by the nonprofit Manned Space Flight Education Foundation, Incorporated. No NASA funds were used for the visitor center construction or operations. In 2014 Space Center Houston became the first Smithsonian-affiliate museum in the city of Houston. In 2016 the visitor center opened Independence Plaza, an exhibit complex allowing visitors to access Independence, a full-scale replica of the space shuttle. That same year, the center hosted nearly one million visitors, and engaged in outreach and educational programs involving more than 100,000 students and educators. See also AEROSPACE MEDICINE, LYNDON B. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER.
Bernard Sakowitz, civic leader and president of Sakowitz Brothers stores, was born in Galveston on January 12, 1907, the son of Matilda (Littman) and Tobias Sakowitz. He received a B.S. from the Wharton School of Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania in 1929 and began his retail career at R. H. Macy Company in New York. In 1929 he returned to Houston and the family business. He was named vice president in charge of merchandizing in 1937. During World War II he served in the United States Army Air Force with the rank of captain. He returned to the store and became president in 1957. Under Bernard's leadership Sakowitz became a significant Houston institution, with stores at one time downtown, in Gulfgate, at the Shamrock Hotel, and in the Galleria-Westheimer area. He and his father built the first Sakowitz suburban store in 1959 on the corner of Westheimer and Post Oak. This was the bellwether that led to development of Westheimer Road into a major Houston street that soon included Neiman-Marcus and later the Galleria, built by Houston's Gerald Hines. The area became known as Uptown Houston. Later Sakowitz expanded to other cities, including Dallas, Phoenix, and Midland. Sakowitz never went public and was the last of the major family-owned chains of specialty stores in America.

Bernard Sakowitz married Ann Baum on July 20, 1933. They had two children, Lynn and Robert. Lynn, who married Oscar Wyatt, Jr., became an international socialite, a friend
of such luminaries as Princess Grace of Monaco, and was often voted one of the best-dressed women in the world. Robert Sakowitz graduated from Harvard cum laude and entered the family business in 1963, becoming president in 1975. Bernard Sakowitz served on the board of directors of the Texas Medical Center, St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital, and Congregation Beth Israel. He led many fund-raising drives for cancer research. He served on the Houston Crime Commission and was director of the Kiwanis Club, the Houston Chamber of Commerce, and the Better Business Bureau. In addition, he was a member of the National Retail Merchants Association, the Houston Angus Club, and the Houston Farm and Ranch Club and was vice president of the Contemporary Music Society of Houston. In 1972 he was named Retailer of the Year by Esquire Magazine. Following a heart attack, he died on April 24, 1981.
"Nature appears to have designated this place for the future seat of government. It is handsome and beautifully elevated, salubrious and well watered, and now in the very heart or centre of population, and will be so for a length of time to come." - A.C. & J. K. ALLEN. "The Town of Houston." Telegraph and Texas Register (Columbia, Tex.), Vol. 1, No. 27, Ed. 1, Tuesday, August 30, 1836.

When Augustus and John Kirby Allen glowingly predicted Houston's future, they could not possibly have imagined the vibrant, diverse metropolis Houstonians celebrate today, filled with people whose roots stretch around the world, representing almost every ethnicity, religion, and culture. Beginning with the Spanish who arrived in the Gulf Coast area in the 1500s, followed by Texians in the early 1800s, African Americans who came as slaves, freedmen, and migrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as people from a variety of foreign lands who arrived following passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, Houston has been a magnet for those seeking a better opportunity in life. The city offered them unlimited possibilities and hope for the future if they worked hard.

The group of entries that follow look at two early immigrants to Houston, one from Germany and the other from Japan, the growth of a church and a neighborhood, and an office building. What they all share is the entrepreneurial spirit that has propelled the city's growth. The individuals and groups involved did not have to reinvent themselves when they arrived. Rather they played to the knowledge and strengths they brought with them as immigrants, worked with others facing similar challenges, and remained focused on their future goals.
Part III: Immigration

“The Very Heart or Centre of Population”

Gustav Dresel started a dry goods business and became a broker for grain, cotton, and land. Tsunekichi Okasaki opened a restaurant and branched out to rice farming. When bad weather destroyed his crops, he put his efforts back into the restaurant business and opened art and tea shops. Similarly St. George Orthodox Christian Church, established by Middle Eastern immigrants, and the Frenchtown neighborhood, founded by Creoles of French, Spanish, and African descent in the 1920s, served as centers to maintain their cultural traditions while becoming part of the larger society. Putting their skills to work to raise money for their respective needs, members of St. George Church and residents of Frenchtown cooked and sold traditional foods and held festivals to fund larger facilities for community members. Lastly the Binz Building, Houston’s first skyscraper, was the vision of German immigrant Jacob Binz who hired Swedish architect Olle Lorehn to make his dream a reality.

In each of these stories, immigrants who recognized the Allen brothers’ vision came together, working with other immigrants who may or may not have looked like them, to build Houston into a population center that has flourished thanks to its diverse citizenry.

- Debbie Z. Harwell
An Antiochian Orthodox Church, St. George Orthodox Church in Houston, Texas, was founded in 1928 by a small group of Middle Eastern immigrants living in the city. They were part of the larger group of Middle Eastern immigrants—primarily Christian—that began arriving in Texas after 1880.

The original group did not have an official building, so the Ladies Altar Society generated the funds to purchase one by cooking and selling Middle Eastern and Asian foods. Eight years later, the Orthodox congregation purchased a former Methodist church building at 1703 Chestnut Street, on the corner of Chestnut and Harrington streets in the Near Northside of Houston. The new church was dedicated on May 3, 1936.

The community grew quickly and underwent an expansion program and ultimately purchased property in September 1954 for their current location at 5311 Mercer Street at Bissonnet Street in the West University area. As the congregation continued to grow and more immigrants came to Houston, St. George Orthodox started mission churches in the outer areas of Houston in order to meet the needs of the city’s burgeoning Orthodox population. The first, St. Anthony the Great Orthodox Christian Church, was established in 1982 in Spring, Texas. St. Joseph Orthodox Church, in West Houston on Hammerly Boulevard, followed in 1993. A third church, Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste Orthodox, was established on Eldridge Road in Sugar Land, Texas, in 2001.

The congregation was—and remains today—open to all those who practice Orthodox Christianity, including Greeks, Sudanese, Ethiopians, Russians, Bosnians, Romanians,
Bulgarians, Serbians, and others. A large group of refugees from the then-Jordanian city of Ramallah joined the congregation following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. In the mid-1980s the congregation was 70 percent Arab-American.

Except for a candlelight vigil held in 1982 during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, St. George is apolitical in its activities and stays focused on humanitarian causes. The church established the Houston Mediterranean Festival in 1982. Historically, it has provided support services to Middle Eastern refugees, has offered Saturday Arab language classes, and served as home to a Ramallah club. Original founders of St. George Orthodox include Jalal Antone, founder of Antone’s Import Company and the famous Antone’s Po’Boy sandwich.
Gustav Dresel, writer, businessman, and first German consul in Texas, the son of Johann Dietrich and Maria (Morrien) Dresel, was born on January 26, 1818, at Geisenheim, Rheingau. He attended high school in Weilburg and later went to business school. After travel in Europe, he came to the United States in 1837 and, when plans for a sawmill or distillery failed to materialize, set out westward. Eventually, he gathered a stock of goods and moved to Houston, where he served as bookkeeper and salesman in a general store, managed a warehouse on Buffalo Bayou, and bought and sold dry goods, grain, and land. Between 1838 and 1841 he traveled in parts of Texas (particularly the area around Houston), Louisiana, and Mississippi, and was involved in a cotton-export business in New Orleans. From 1842 to 1846 Dresel helped in the family wine business in Europe. On his return, he served as business manager in Texas for the Adelsverein in Galveston.

He served as first German consul in Texas for Duke Adolph of Nassau, from whose country many German immigrants came. He kept extensive accounts of his experiences and impressions in a diary called "Texanisches Tagebuch," first published in the 1920–21 yearbook of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois and published in translation in 1954 by the University of Texas Press as Gustav Dresel's Houston Journal. Dresel is credited with inspiring poet A. H. Hoffmann von Fallersleben's Texanische Lieder. While conducting business for the Adelsverein, he died of yellow fever on September 14, 1848, at Morris Farm near Victoria while he was traveling from Galveston to New Braunfels. He is buried at the place where he died.
The Binz Building is often called Houston’s “first skyscraper.” The tallest building to have been constructed in Houston at the time, the six-story brick office building attracted attention throughout the state when it opened in 1895. The Binz Building, located across the street from the Capitol (Rice) Hotel, sat at the northeast corner of Main Street and Texas Avenue, the most prominent intersection in Houston.

Jacob Binz, a German immigrant, dabbled in real estate and other business ventures after he arrived in Houston by way of Chicago in 1860. In 1894, despite warnings from skeptical friends, he determined to construct a building unlike any yet seen in Houston. Binz hired architect Olle Lorehn (then of the architectural firm of Lorehn & Friz) to design his new building. A year earlier, Lorehn had worked as a consulting architect on the five-story Kiam Building, two blocks north of the Binz Building on Main Street. For Binz, Lorehn designed another office building with all the modern conveniences of the time and one floor taller than the Kiam.

Swedish-born Lorehn had arrived in Houston in 1891 to supervise construction of the American Brewing Company. He became one of Houston’s most notable early architects. Only a handful of Lorehn’s buildings still stood in the 2010s, but they included Houston Fire Station No. 7 (1898–99), which was home to the Houston Fire Museum in 2016; James Bute Company Warehouse (1910); and Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral (1912).
Binz hired contractors from Chicago, as no Houston firms had experience with such a substantial structure. He stopped work every time crews poured concrete in order to allow it to set for twenty-eight days to achieve its maximum strength. This delayed completion by more than six months. By the time the building was finished, the cost to Binz came to $120,000.

The Binz Building was constructed of heavy wood planks faced with buff-colored Roman press brick, without the structural steel frame used in later construction. The building was almost square with 104 feet of frontage on Main Street and ninety-eight feet on Texas Avenue. It sat on a deep basement, with storefronts at ground level on Main Street and offices on the five floors above. The Binz had the distinction of being the first Houston building to be illustrated in an architecture journal—the November 17, 1894, issue of *American Architect and Building News*.

The Binz Building featured both electricity and gas, was fully wired for telephone service in all offices, and had a double elevator operated by hydraulics. Large windows as well as an interior shaft provided ample light and ventilation, respectively, to the office space. For fire protection, a roof-top water tank drew water from an artesian well on Texas Avenue to feed pipes connected to hose valves on each floor.

In an era dominated by Victorian architecture, the Binz Building was notable for its clean design, without the gingerbread, gables, or towers then in vogue. Gray Texas granite clad the base of the building, and carved limestone provided some restrained ornamentation to the façade. Three floors of

Binz Building in Downtown Houston. Courtesy of the Harris County Historical Society.
stacked window pairs topped by arches at the fifth floor provided the building with its most distinctive feature. A stone ledge visually separated the top floor from those below, and a two-foot-wide cornice capped the building.

When the building opened in September 1895, newspaper reports heralded its unique qualities. People came from all around the region, some on special train excursions, to see the impressive new building and to ride its elevator to the top floor.

The Elks moved their lodge to the top floor, with its unimpeded city views, as soon as the building opened. Much of the leasable space had been claimed before the building was even finished, and the offices soon filled completely with lawyers, doctors, real-estate brokers, and other professionals.

Another ten years passed before Houston’s skyline began to fill with other tall buildings. By 1910 Houston’s downtown had almost twenty buildings of six stories or more.

By the 1950s the Binz Building was the last wood-frame building on the surrounding blocks, as well as the last building still hooked to the old, failing sewer line serving Main Street. The upper four stories had been closed in prior years over concerns about fire and health hazards. The Binz Building was taken down in 1951 to make way for a new, more modern structure. When demolition began, the Binz Building proved to still be exceptionally sturdy; the wood planks were found to be, according to the Houston Post, “as strong as rock” and in excellent condition.

The replacement building that opened in 1952 kept the Binz name and was itself replaced in the 1980s with a third structure (consisting of fourteen floors), also named the Binz Building, which still stood at the corner of Main Street and Texas Avenue in the 2010s.

The Modern Binz Building.
Frenchtown was a neighborhood of four square blocks located on the northern edge of Houston's Fifth Ward in Harris County. It comprised approximately 500 Creoles of French, Spanish, and African descent from Louisiana. These “Creoles of Color” were descendants of a mostly free, mixed-race population that lived in colonial southwestern Louisiana in the eighteenth century and came to northeastern Houston and organized a community in 1922.

Early Frenchtown residents came to Houston, which was booming in the 1920s, to seek economic opportunity. Many Frenchtown skilled or semiskilled workers, including mechanics, carpenters, sawmill workers, and bricklayers, were recruited and employed by the Southern Pacific Railroad. Others worked in the oil industry and other Houston industries along the Houston Ship Channel. More Creoles moved to Houston after the devastating Great Mississippi Flood of 1927, and another wave of migration was spurred by Houston’s employment growth during World War II. The area, a neighborhood primarily of shotgun houses, was bounded (in the 2010s) by Collingsworth Street to the north, Russell Street to the east, Liberty Road to the south, and Jensen Drive to the west. The name Frenchtown was in common use by the late 1930s by both residents and outsiders.
Their community of largely French-speaking Catholics was centered around Our Mother of Mercy Roman Catholic Church and had a rich Creole culture distinguished by its colorful patios, unique cuisine, and characteristic zydeco music. Historical markers at Collingsworth and U.S. Highway 59 and at Liberty and U.S. Highway 59 commemorate Frenchtown and its role in developing zydeco, a blend of traditional Creole music with Houston’s blues and R&B.

The tight-knit group married within the community and thereby maintained their cultural identity. Many residents built their homes with lumber from boxcars retired from Southern Pacific Railroad’s Englewood Yard, on the east side of the intersection of Liberty Road and Wallisville Road. Neighborhood streets were dirt roads; residents used streetcars for transportation and walked to Jensen Drive and Liberty Road to ride them. The women of the community refused to take employment as cooks, despite the appeal of their cooking.

Residents of Frenchtown had a distinct language, religion, cuisine, music, and in some instances light skin color that separated them from the larger black community in the Fifth Ward. These differences caused some resentment in the black community. Some Frenchtown children were ridiculed in school due to their language, and for some adults language made assimilation difficult, so parents eventually discouraged the use of French by the children. Some changed their names on arrival in Houston.

Early residents of the area walked three miles or paid five cents to ride the streetcar to St. Nicholas Catholic Church at Clay and Live Oak, then the only Catholic Church in Houston for people of color. By 1929 they had raised funds for their own church by holding la-la dances and selling gumbo, boudin, and pralines in their homes. Before construction began, the funds were stolen, but the Southern Pacific Railroad donated a new site, and the residents themselves constructed Our Mother of Mercy Roman Catholic Church, a humble structure at Sumpter and Granger. The first Mass was celebrated on June 9, 1929.
Two theaters that served the neighborhood were still standing as of 2016: the Lyons Theatre (a revival church in 2016) at 4026 Lyons at Benson and the 1941 De Luxe Theater (newly-renovated as an event venue in 2016) at 3303 Lyons.

A number of factors contributed to the gradual decline of Frenchtown and its distinct culture after World War II. With the end of residential segregation, subsequent generations moved out of the area, while others married into the larger black community. The construction of U. S. Highway 59 cut through the center of the community. Frenchtown gradually merged into the Fifth Ward and lost much of its Creole identity. By the 1990s groups such as the Frenchtown Community Association led efforts to preserve the Creole culture of Frenchtown, including its musical component—zydeco. Considered to be a birthplace of zydeco, Frenchtown was still home to popular clubs such as the Continental Zydeco Ballroom, which closed in 1997, and the Silver Slipper Lounge, which was still open in 2016.

Doris McClendon at the Continental Zydeco in Frenchtown. Photograph by James Fraher.
One of the first known three **Japanese immigrants** to the Lone Star State, Tsunekichi Okasaki, restaurateur, came to the United States in 1888 from Okayama Prefecture, Japan, and by the 1890s had arrived in Houston, where he was known as “Tom Brown.” Okasaki was proprietor of the “Japanese Restaurant” at 1111 Congress Avenue in downtown Houston. The fare at his restaurant was ironically not rice and traditional Japanese cuisine but American food. The establishment became quite popular, perhaps because he was known for the low price of ten cents to twenty-five cents for a substantial meal.

In 1905 Okasaki entered a partnership with future Communist party member Sugataro Yabuki, often known as Sen Katayama. For the purpose of **rice farming**, Okasaki purchased more than 10,000 acres of land in Live Oak and McMullen counties and sought investors in Japan, while Katayama recruited supporters and laborers in Texas. Their partnership eventually ended due to Katayama’s involvement in and association with the American Socialist movement. Okasaki attempted additional rice farming ventures with another local Japanese Texan immigrant Kuniemon Sando (also from Okayama), but poor weather caused the ruin of Okasaki’s crops and his ultimate return to the restaurant industry. Though rice farming was a popular industry for many Japanese Texan immigrants, Okasaki’s efforts in the business failed.
As a leader in the Houston Japanese American community, Okasaki often employed other immigrants in his businesses. After the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, Okasaki invited displaced West Coast immigrants like Otsukichi Matsumoto to Houston to work in his restaurant. Many Japanese waiters, dishwashers, and cooks worked for him, and he often hosted traditional holidays, including New Year’s and the Emperor’s Birthday, at his establishments. In contrast to his farming endeavors, he had such business success that he became a partner in the Japan Art and Tea Company in 1911, along with Junzo Fujino and Yoshimatsu Konishi. He independently owned the Japanese Art Store at 715 Main Street, just blocks away from his other business partnership. Unfortunately, one of his art stores burned down, pushing Tsunekichi back towards the restaurant industry. He opened two more establishments, including the “Eagle Café,” which was listed as a “chop suey parlor” in the local directory.

Okasaki may have been married to a woman named Kumae. Both names appeared on a 1908 passenger list from Hong Kong to Honolulu, and they were listed as married. Tsunekichi’s age was recorded as forty-two, and Kumae’s age was given as twenty-two. She was also listed in a 1911 Houston city directory, but was not listed in the 1910 census (though Tsunekichi Okasaki was listed as being married). Kumae’s name did not appear in city directories after 1911.

By 1910 nearly 350 Japanese settlers were in Texas, and by 1920 there were almost 450. Many of these immigrants entered the state from the south, where they had worked in the mines or railroads in Mexico. Many of these early arrivals were laborers and others established themselves as businessmen or entrepreneurs. Okasaki continued to operate his Houston restaurants until after World War I. The last year that he was listed in...
Houston city directories was 1919. In 1920, three Japanese restaurants were listed in Houston city directories. The Japanese Café was operated by Okasaki’s fellow countryman Kuniemon Sando. Two other restaurants (both listed as “Japanese Restaurant”) were run by Benjamin Kinugasa and Hideharu Numano. According to Thomas K. Walls, author of *The Japanese Texans*, Okasaki returned to Japan where he bought a small hotel and lived the rest of his life. The date of his death is not known.

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**Eagle Café Advertisement.**

*Houston Post*, April 20, 1913.
Part IV: Houston’s Underbelly

“Wretched Little Town”

“Houston is a wretched little town composed of about twenty shops, and a hundred huts, dispersed here and there, among trunks of felled trees. It is infested with methodists and ants.” – Emmanuel Domenech, Missionary Adventures in Texas and Mexico: A Personal Narrative of Six Years’ Sojourn in Those Regions

From the beginning, Houston was never going to win any beauty contests. Early settlers had to contend with a muddy town with “mosquitoes as large as grasshoppers” as Dilue Harris noted in 1836. Two years later, the town continued to leave a bad first impression when J. H. Herndon wrote that he “formed a bad opinion of the place which time will correct or confirm.”

Then there were the saloons. An anonymous account from 1837 took note of the prevalence of alcohol and the proclivity of those early Houstonians to imbibe: “While there were a few who did not exceed the limits of moderation, a large majority knew no restraint to their appetites.”

Many of those thirsty citizens gathered at places like Kessler’s Arcade, located near Main Street between Preston and Prairie. Henry Kessler operated it first as a general store but soon expanded it to include a restaurant and a “notoriously rowdy” bar known as the Round Tent Bar. Factor in the hangings and the bouts of yellow fever that decimated the population, and it is easy to understand the objectionable opinions.

Though civility would eventually catch on, Houston had a seedy streak that percolated just beneath its surface as a future great city. Take, for example, Vinegar Hill, a section of Houston northwest of downtown where criminals in the late nineteenth century toiled in forms of vice that included prostitution, gambling, and the sale of narcotics, to name a few.
Part IV: Houston’s Underbelly

“Wretched Little Town”

As Houston transformed itself into a major population center in the twentieth century, vice took hold in more polished establishments like the Domain Privee, an illegal casino. The Southern Colonial-style mansion, which catered to the well-heeled of Houston, featured stables, servants’ quarters, and a heated swimming pool. By the 1950s, law enforcement had wised up to the goings on at Jakie Freedman’s establishment and shut it down.

Despite all the innovation and ingenuity that took root in Houston, many continued to suffer. Playwright and author Jan de Hartog and his wife Marjorie settled in Houston in the 1960s and volunteered at the city/county-run hospital. The horrid conditions they encountered there led de Hartog to publish *The Hospital*, an account of his experiences at Jefferson Davis Hospital, and urged Houstonians to take a more active role in how Harris County treats its indigent.

Perhaps Kezia Payne DePelchin would have been pleased with the work the de Hartogs undertook in Houston. Almost a century prior, the nurse and teacher provided aid for those stricken by yellow fever and set up the city’s first day-care center. Though Houston has always been plagued by various ills of society, at practically every step in the city’s development Houstonians have also risen to the challenge to address these problems.

- J. R. Gonzales
Vinegar Hill, an early red-light and entertainment district in Houston, was located in the northwest corner of downtown on a wedge-shaped city block formed by the intersection of Washington and Preston avenues and bounded on the east by the Buffalo Bayou a few blocks south of the Central Railroad Depot. Tin Can Alley, the main thoroughfare that divided Vinegar Hill into two sections and ended at the east bank of Buffalo Bayou, was as legendary as the area itself. One Houstonian commented that “Tin Can Alley” was “the toughest place in the South.”

Sanborn Company Map of Houston (1896) with the Location of Vinegar Hill. Courtesy of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.
Vinegar Hill was established by the late 1860s. Local tradition holds that this area was dubbed Vinegar Hill because of the infestation of vinegaroon scorpions in the neighborhood. The name may also be in reference to the smells that emanated from the nearby vinegar factory. Regardless of where it originated, the name was meant to be repulsive and described its residents and the type of lawlessness that prevailed within its boundaries.

The whole area consisted of one and two-room box-shaped tenement houses and dilapidated shacks randomly scattered all over the land. There were no fences or definitive dividing lines between structures nor were there sidewalks except for worn pathways left by those who moved from house to house. The clusters of houses served as residences for African American women and children. Vinegar Hill had a strong criminal element that catered to gambling, prostitution, violence, and the sale of drugs. Although the area had a primarily black population, people of various ethnic groups and races engaged in unlawful activities. Vinegar’s Hill’s main business was a saloon located at the corner of Washington Avenue and 9th Street.

At the center of Vinegar Hill’s den of infamy was the legendary “Queen of Vinegar Hill”—Caroline Riley. Often called the “one-eyed terror,” Riley, a black woman who had arrived in Vinegar Hill about 1867 and had many run-ins with law enforcement, was regarded as intelligent but also “cunning” and “treacherous.” She ruled with an iron fist. According to Houston: A History and Guide, “Big Foot Jen, Charley Johnson, Lillie Rivers, and Julia Baker were her lieutenants.”

When a Galveston Daily News reporter, writing about Houston’s “dark side,” visited the palace of Queen Caroline Riley in March 1874, he wrote that “her features as they were illumined by the light of an ordinary kerosene lamp, bore fearful record of years of dissipation, sin and crime.”

This news story, along with community complaints, possibly prompted law enforcement and firefighters at Mechanic 6 and Brooks 5 stations to begin the systematic clean up of
Vinegar Hill. The “cleansing” included incidences of arson committed by some of the firefighters to “rid the Hill of one more shack,” as well as knocking down some rickety structures with the use of high pressure water hoses. When Caroline Riley died in April 1880, the area was sold at public auction the following year, on April 5, 1881, to make way for the expansion and improvements of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. The reputation of Vinegar Hill gradually changed. By the 1920s, when the Tennison Hotel was built to accommodate arriving and departing train passengers, Vinegar Hill consisted of large and small factories and stores throughout the area. This commercialization continued into the 1950s. Once the demolition of Grand Central Station took place in the 1960s, the need for the Tennison Hotel dwindled until it closed in 1972.

In the 2010s the elevated overpasses of Interstate 45 and the Downtown Aquarium Houston were all that remained of Houston’s oldest entertainment district—Vinegar Hill.
The Domain Privee was an illegal gambling casino owned by Houstonian Jake “Jakie” Freedman. Freedman was born on March 20, 1891, in Odessa, Russia. He immigrated to the United States and attained citizenship for his military service during World War I. He began his gambling career on Galveston Island, then “the gaming capital of Texas,” in partnership with Dutch Voight, Ollie Quinn, and Sam and Rose Maceo, owners of the renowned Balinese Room. Freedman ultimately became one of the leading gaming businessmen in the country.

While Freedman was working at the Rice Hotel as a bellhop, a convenient cover for gambling activities and hustling bootleg liquor, he met future Texas governor William P. Hobby. When Hobby ran for governor, Freedman organized the city bellhops for Hobby.

From 1940 to 1951 Freedman owned the illegal casino Domain Privee. The establishment, which also served as his home, was located on the 11000 block of Main Street—today just south of Old Main Street Loop Road and just east of Craighead Drive, then an unincorporated area between Houston and Galveston. The palatial Southern Colonial-style mansion sat in a handsomely-landscaped park that was surrounded by a high fence and included stables, garages, servants’ quarters, and a heated
swimming pool. Three to six watchmen patrolled the area. Only Houston's elite were allowed to patronize the casino; their young adult children were made welcome at Domain Privee and were allowed limited gambling—“just enough for excitement.” Freedman selectively admitted only the wealthy and well-behaved and kept the crowd well under fifty patrons; his security staff politely turned away others and told them that Mr. Freedman was not at home. Some of his admire customers led Freedman to profitable oil investments.

“Little Jakie Freedman” eventually became known as the “prince of Houston’s gambling.” He grew so wealthy that his decision not to withdraw his money from Judge James Elkins’s First National Bank, one of the state's oldest financial institutions, is credited with saving the Houston bank from collapse during the Great Depression.

Eventually, Texas authorities closed down Houston gambling and the Domain Privee. Freedman and his partners built the Sands Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas in 1952. The Sands became the “in” place in Las Vegas and hosted the leading names in entertainment including Danny Thomas, Dean Martin, and Frank Sinatra.

Freedman was respected as a man of high integrity and a quality gaming operator. One acquaintance called him “the most colorful man I’d ever met.” Another described him as “the cutest little guy…. He had a Jewish accent and he was from Houston. So everything was, ‘Jou’lall come to da Sands.’”

Freedman died during heart surgery in Los Angeles on January 19, 1958, and was interred in the mausoleum at Beth Israel Cemetery in Houston on West Dallas at Lamb. He was survived by his wife Sadie and son Nathan. The abandoned Domain Privee mansion burned down in 1976.
Henry Kessler (also spelled Kesler or Kisler), businessman and early Houston civic leader, was born in Silesia about 1812 and immigrated to the United States with his brother Charles in 1832. He arrived in Texas by 1836 and is probably the man of that name who was awarded a bounty certificate for 320 acres of land for his services in the Texas army from April 11 to July 20, 1836. As early as November 1837 he was operating a general store in Houston known as Kessler's Arcade. The establishment, located near Main Street between Preston and Prairie, was enlarged in October 1838 to include a restaurant and bar, known as the Round Tent Bar. Soldiers and veterans of the Texas Revolution often traded land scrip at the notoriously rowdy bar in exchange for drinks and food. Kessler’s Arcade, which provided dry goods, sundries, German newspapers, and music, became an early focal point for the nascent community of Houston. It served as a polling station, and was a popular meeting place for early civic groups and municipal organizations. It is also where Kessler experimented with mulberry trees and cultivated a garden famous for its corn.

Kessler became an important member of early Houston society. He served as treasurer of the Buffalo Bayou Company, organized to make the bayou navigable, was a member of the Houston City Council, treasurer of a city school, vice president of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, a member of the board of health, secretary of the Houston Post Oak Jockey Club, and a Mason. He married Mary Henry Kessler (also spelled Kesler or Kisler), businessman and early Houston civic leader, was born in Silesia about 1812 and immigrated to the United States with his brother Charles in 1832. He arrived in Texas by 1836 and is probably the man of that name who was awarded a bounty certificate for 320 acres of land for his services in the Texas army from April 11 to July 20, 1836. As early as November 1837 he was operating a general store in Houston known as Kessler's Arcade. The establishment, located near Main Street between Preston and Prairie, was enlarged in October 1838 to include a restaurant and bar, known as the Round Tent Bar. Soldiers and veterans of the Texas Revolution often traded land scrip at the notoriously rowdy bar in exchange for drinks and food. Kessler’s Arcade, which provided dry goods, sundries, German newspapers, and music, became an early focal point for the nascent community of Houston. It served as a polling station, and was a popular meeting place for early civic groups and municipal organizations. It is also where Kessler experimented with mulberry trees and cultivated a garden famous for its corn.

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Houston Post Oak Jockey Club Meeting Announcement. Houston Telegraph and Texas Register, October 2, 1839.

Selections from the Handbook of Houston
Bonzano of Wurttemberg, Germany, on March 22, 1838. The couple had at least one child.

Kessler died at his home in Houston on October 30, 1840. At the time of his death, Kessler possessed a considerable fortune, including sizeable land holdings and numerous city lots. A notice of December 25, 1840, indicated that Kessler's wife had been appointed his administrator.
Kezia Payne DePelchin, social worker, teacher, and nurse, was born in the Madeira Islands on July 23, 1828, the daughter of Abraham and Catherine Armstrong (Cartwright) Payne. She spent her early life in England. Sometime during the mid-1830s her mother died in her native Funchal, Madeira. The family went to New York in late 1836 and to Galveston, Texas, in 1837. In 1839 her father married their governess, Hannah Bainton. A yellow fever outbreak at Galveston left Kezia an orphan without financial resources; in 1839 she had contracted yellow fever as well but survived it. According to various sources, she arrived in Houston in 1841 accompanied by her widowed stepmother. Apparently Kezia raised a girl, Hannah Cordelia Buckner, for a time, in order to assist the child's widower father. In the 1840s she worked as a music teacher and also practiced charity work among the sick and destitute. With an acquired immunity to yellow fever, she nursed the sick in yellow fever epidemics in Houston. She operated a number of schools during the 1850s, including one in Bastrop (1850). She was married on August 23, 1862, to itinerant musician Adolph DePelchin. They had no children and soon parted company because of his financial recklessness. During the Civil War she joined a nursing corps in Houston. In 1875 she was employed by a German-English school, and in 1877, when the city's free public schools opened, she taught in the Fourth Ward, Houston. She nursed yellow fever victims in epidemics as far away as Memphis, Tennessee, and Senatobia, Mississippi. She was employed for a time at doctors Stuart and Boyle's sanitarium as a nurse. She was appointed head nurse of Houston's first City Charity Hospital, and in 1888 became the first woman matron of the Bayland Orphans' Home for Boys. In 1892, to help her meet the cost of renting two rooms over a store and hiring a woman to care for two homeless children, DePelchin founded Houston's first day-care center, charging only employed mothers who could pay
The DePelchin Faith Home, a nonsectarian, community-supported institution for dependent children, was organized on January 20, 1893, by 100 Houston women to honor DePelchin after her death. The home was named in recognition of DePelchin's faith and her belief in the beneficence of the people of Houston. James A. Baker, founder of the law firm of Baker and Botts, drew up a charter and bylaws. The main building, modeled on an Italianate villa, was designed in 1912 by the architectural firm of Mauran and Russell of St. Louis, and was built on land donated in 1910 by Harriet Levy, wife of a Houston merchant. This building, which served as the home's headquarters for the next twenty-five years, was later added to the National Register of Historic Places (1984) and designated a Texas Historic Landmark (1984) and City of Houston Landmark (1999). Harris County funding for the facility was first obtained in 1914. A twelve-acre site that now serves as the main campus was purchased in 1927, and the institution was renamed the DePelchin Faith Home and Children’s Bureau.
DePelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau Association after it obtained a new charter in 1928. In 1934 a fifty-acre farm near Spring, Texas, was acquired for use as a summer camp and group home, and in 1936 the institution absorbed the foster-home program of the Houston branch of the Florence Crittenton Homes Association and became involved in adoption and protection work. Nine new buildings were completed in 1937 with the help of the Works Progress Administration (see WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION), as well as state and local funding. The DePelchin Home is considered the first Houston institution of its kind to serve black children (beginning in 1939). It was one of several founders of the city's Community Chest (now known as United Way). In 1940 it provided services for a total of 1,087 children. By the 1950s, the institution included a hospital, a clinic, and a library, and was a member of the Child Welfare League of America and the Houston Council of Social Agencies.

In 1983 the home was renamed the DePelchin Children's Center to reflect its expanding role as a multi-service agency. In 1978 the Cullen Bayou Place mental health program began, and during the 1980s the center opened satellite offices in multiple locations in the Greater Houston area. A new forty-bed psychiatric hospital began operation in 1991, and in 1992 the center merged with the Houston Child Guidance Center, a local provider of mental health services for children and adolescents. In 2012 the DePelchin Children's Center became the fifty-second member institution of the Texas Medical Center. That same year, DePelchin affiliated with the Caring Family Network, an Austin-based foster care and adoption agency. In 2016 the two organizations merged under the DePelchin name to form one of the largest private foster care and adoption agencies in Texas, with offices located throughout the state. At that time the DePelchin Children's Center also offered programs in psychiatric care, family counseling, prevention and early intervention services for at-risk youth, residential treatment, special education, home therapy, parent education, child-abuse prevention, and autism assessment to nearly 30,000 Texas children and their families.
Written by Dutch-born playwright and author Jan de Hartog and published in 1964, *The Hospital* exposed the horrible conditions at Houston’s Jefferson Davis Hospital. In 1962 de Hartog and his wife Marjorie settled in Houston where he served as a dramatist-in-residence at the University of Houston and taught an advanced course in playwriting. Shortly after their arrival, the de Hartogs learned from acquaintances that help was needed to feed the newborns at Jefferson Davis Hospital in the city’s Fourth Ward. Because of a staffing shortage, hours would sometimes go by before the babies were fed.

The de Hartogs, who were Quakers, offered their assistance as volunteers at the hospital. Jan de Hartog worked as an orderly in the emergency room. What he saw at the hospital stunned him. Eight months into their work, de Hartog exposed what he called a “monument of misery” at the hospital in a letter published on April 21, 1963, in the *Houston Chronicle*. De Hartog described a facility where “the floors are slippery with blood and vomit” and malfunctioning beds were “propped up with chairs under the mattresses and held together with surgical tape.”

De Hartog said he was compelled to write the letter about the hospital’s conditions after Houston city councilman Frank Mann suggested a cut in the hospital’s budget. At the time, funding for Jefferson Davis Hospital was provided by the city and county. A thirteen-member board of managers, appointed by the Houston City Council and Harris County Commissioners Court, oversaw its operations. Medical services were provided by Baylor College of Medicine. Weeks after de Hartog’s April letter, a new city/county hospital—Ben Taub General Hospital—opened in the *Texas Medical Center*. De Hartog was concerned the problems at Jefferson Davis would continue at Ben Taub.
Houstonians both commended and criticized de Hartog for making his findings at the hospital public. Those siding with him contrasted elected leaders’ treatment of the Hospital system with their support for the Astrodome. Former Chronicle editor M. E. Walter challenged de Hartog’s assessment of conditions at Jefferson Davis and noted its “splendid record over the country for curing the sick....” Walter noted that community leaders tried to solve the problem by setting up a new taxing agency through a Hospital district, but that it had been shot down by voters in previous years.

De Hartog followed up on his letter by challenging Harris County residents to contribute funding to augment nursing services at the city/county-run hospital, and he pledged $10,000 of his own money. Though the move fell short of its $60,000 goal, residents, aided by the de Hartogs and their fellow Quaker friends, mobilized to provide volunteer services at Ben Taub as trained orderlies and nurses’ aides.

De Hartog’s experiences at both hospitals garnered national attention after he published The Hospital in October 1964. In the book, de Hartog described in greater detail the conditions at Jefferson Davis, including a patient who died of suffocation because a tracheotomy tube was not cleaned in a timely manner, the result of staffing shortages. De Hartog also wrote of a nurse removing a cockroach from a child’s tracheotomy tube. One nursing supervisor backed up de Hartog’s claims in The Hospital and noted a severe shortage of registered nurses at Ben Taub.
In a review of the book, the *Wall Street Journal* criticized de Hartog’s portrayal of his efforts to bring attention to the plight of Houston’s charity hospitals and said, “There is a conceit that shines through such mercy and it is most apparent when the author must interrupt his narrative to refute his own ‘taint of saintliness.”” However, the review also praised de Hartog’s success in stirring residents to take action and stated that he “succeeds in arousing the compassion of the reader….”

Proceeds from the book went to the nurses’ aid training program. The book helped renew calls for the Harris County Commissioners to order an election to create a hospital district. In early 1965 voters had their say on the matter, but despite endorsements from de Hartog and county leaders, the measure was defeated. Disappointed, de Hartog again asked residents to volunteer their time at the hospitals. He left the city a short time later.

On November 20, 1965, county residents finally approved the creation of a hospital district to oversee operations of Jefferson Davis and Ben Taub hospitals, the fifth time the measure had gone to voters.
"Order through law, justice with mercy" – Motto of the Houston Police Department

In a city as big and diverse as Houston, the concept of law and order and its effects can be a weighty topic. However, a number of important people and events influenced the city—and even the nation—over the course of the last 150 years.

When it comes to criminal law, Percy Eugene Foreman was one of the state’s most colorful and successful defense lawyers. Known for his unorthodox trial strategies, Foreman defended more than a thousand accused killers during his sixty years practicing law. In the end, only one was executed.

From the side of law enforcement, Margie Annette Hawkins Duty was a trailblazer in Houston. In 1953 she became the first female African American to work for the Houston Police Department. She worked as a plainclothes officer in the department’s Juvenile Division before transferring to the Jail Division and retiring in 1986.

In the 1800s Alexander Erichson was one of the many dedicated lawmen who worked to keep the peace in Harris County, even serving as city marshal on a few occasions. In 1877 his career as an officer would be put to the test when he was involved in a Wild West-style gunfight on Main Street with outlaw Matt Woodlief.
Part V: Law and Order

“Order Through Law, Justice with Mercy”

As civilians, quite a few Houstonians made their mark on the legal profession, especially when it came to establishing rights for the underserved. Hortense Ward, a champion of women’s rights and a suffrage leader, was one of the first women admitted to the State Bar. She was also the first woman in Harris County to register to vote. During the summer of 1918, she led a grassroots effort to get Texas women registered. In just seventeen days, she was able to register nearly 386,000 women.

Heman Marion Sweatt did not have the same opportunity as others, but he pressed on. Active in the NAACP, Sweatt decided in the 1940s to enroll in law school at the University of Texas. State segregation policies kept him from being admitted, which set off a lawsuit against the university that would make its way through the court system and to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1950 the high court sided with Sweatt, and he was able to soon enroll as a student at the law school, scoring an early victory in the Civil Rights Movement.

Whether on the side of law enforcement or in the courts, Houstonians have always played a significant role in upholding the law and making sure that its residents, both here and elsewhere, are protected by the laws of the land.

- J. R. Gonzales
Margie Annette Hawkins Duty, the first female African American to be employed as a police officer in Houston, was born in Jennings, Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana, to Robert Hawkins and Alice Hawkins on August 28, 1922. She had two sisters and two brothers.

Margie married Nathaniel Duty, also a Louisiana native, in Shreveport in December 1945. In January 1946 Nathaniel reenlisted in the United States Army Air Forces in Shreveport; he was promoted to staff sergeant. Margie worked in Shreveport as a cashier. Later the couple moved to Houston, where Nathaniel was stationed at Ellington Air Force Base. After retiring from the military, Nathaniel worked at NASA. Initially, Margie took a job in the office of the Houston Housing Authority. The couple had no children.

In the middle of the twentieth century, white police officers in Houston often were reluctant to serve in neighborhoods that were predominantly black, so as the city grew, the department needed to hire additional black officers. Margie Duty learned of one or more job openings for police officers in the Houston Police Department. At that time there were a few male African-American officers in the department, but there had never been a female African-American officer employed there. Duty applied for a job and was hired in July 1953. She began a three-month training period but was not allowed to attend training at the police academy. Then, she was sworn in by Police Chief L. D. Morrison in November 1953. Interestingly, her original official job title was not even “officer”; it was “matron.”
One of Margie Duty’s work assignments was to interview young black female crime victims, some of whom had been raped. She also was responsible for black (and only black) female inmates. In a gruesome case in July 1955, Officer Duty was involved in the investigation of a case in which a two-year-old girl (who was left unsupervised for a few minutes) beat a five-month-old baby girl to death with a large perfume bottle, a baby’s milk bottle, and a stick.

During the first twenty-three years of Duty’s law-enforcement career, she worked as a plainclothes officer in the juvenile division. In later years, she transferred to the jail division and worked there as a uniformed officer.

Margie Duty’s goddaughter, Cynthia Larkin, remembered her as a petite, feisty lady.

Margie Duty retired in late August 1986, one day after her sixty-fourth birthday. She had served for more than thirty-three years. In an interview at the end of her career, Margie on her role as a pioneer said: “I didn’t even think about that portion [being the first black woman in the department]. I was interested in a job. I believed I could give them a service. And that was my purpose in applying for the job.” She did not think of herself as a trailblazer.

Margie Duty died on April 23, 2001, at seventy-eight years of age. Her funeral was held at the Jones Memorial United Methodist Church in Houston where she and her husband had been members for nearly half a century. As the wife of Nathaniel Duty, who had served in the United States Air Force in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, her interment was in the Houston National Cemetery.

For her first six years on the job, Margie Duty had continued to be the only female African-American officer in the Houston Police Department. Later she was joined by others. One of them, May Walker, wrote about Margie in her book The History of Black...
Police Officers in the Houston Police Department, 1878–1988 (1989). In a 1991 interview with *Crisis* magazine, Walker fondly recalled, “Margie Duty was the mother of us all.” And Officer Johnnie V. Greene, the second black female hired, said, “She [Duty] was a pioneer, as far as most blacks were concerned. She had been handling it alone. But the racism and all of the other stuff she had to go through didn’t matter, because she was a very special person.”
Percy Eugene Foreman, criminal-defense lawyer, the son of Ransom Parson and William Pinckney (Rogers) Foreman, a Polk County sheriff, was born on June 21, 1902, in a log cabin near Cold Springs, Texas. He was one of eight children. At the age of six he was a shoeshine boy in Livingston. At fifteen he left school to pursue a variety of enterprises; these included shoeshine stands, newspaper routes, a laundry, a bill-collection agency, and a contract to load bales of cotton on freight trains—for which he eventually hired laborers to do the work for eight cents a bale. By the end of World War I Foreman had accumulated significant savings. After finishing a correspondence course in Houston and spending a year at the Staunton Military Academy in Virginia, he joined a chautauqua circuit and toured small towns giving humorous lectures on topics including "how to get the most out of life" and "the high mission of women." In 1927 he graduated from the University of Texas law school, where he had typed manuscripts for extra money. He was admitted to the State Bar of Texas and spent several years as a county prosecutor and assistant district attorney before entering private practice as a junior partner in the Houston law firm of Lockett and Foreman. Foreman, who was known for his unconventional trial strategies, handled society divorces, and in sixty years of practice defended more than 1,000 accused murderers, only one of whom was executed. Among his most famous clients were James Earl Ray, whom he persuaded to plead guilty to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in exchange for a life sentence; socialite Candace Mossler's nephew Melvin Lane Powers, acquitted of a murder charge; Alvin Lee King, who killed five people in a Baptist church and committed suicide before his trial; and Charles Harrelson, sentenced to fifteen years for a contract killing and involved in the assassination
of a federal judge in San Antonio. Foreman preferred cash as payment for his services, but if a client didn't have any, he would take property instead, including jewelry, real estate, boats, automobiles, furniture, and artwork. He became a multimillionaire. Foreman served as president of the National Association of Defense Lawyers. He was twice married; he and his first wife adopted a son. On April 21, 1957, he married German-born Marguerite Obert, with whom he had one child. Foreman died on August 25, 1988, and was buried at Forest Park Westheimer.
Heman Marion Sweatt, civil-rights plaintiff, was born on December 11, 1912, in Houston, the fourth of six children of James Leonard and Ella Rose (Perry) Sweatt. Like other black Houstonians, Sweatt attended racially segregated schools. He graduated from Jack Yates High School in 1930 and subsequently attended Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, where he earned an undergraduate degree in 1934. After returning to Houston, Sweatt pursued several occupations before teaching at a grade school in Cleburne in 1936 and serving as the school's acting principal for a year. He decided to enter medical school and matriculated in biology at the University of Michigan in 1937. After completing his second semester, he left Ann Arbor and again returned to Houston, where he worked as a substitute mailman. In April 1940 he married his high school sweetheart, Constantine Mitchell, and bought a house. He was acquainted with several plaintiffs in civil suits, including Richard R. Grovey, his barber, and Lonnie E. Smith, his dentist. As a boy Sweatt had attended several meetings of the Houston branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. During the early 1940s he participated in voter-registration drives and raised funds for lawsuits against the white primary. An outspoken black Dallas publisher, Carter W. Wesley, who was a friend of Sweatt's father, allowed Sweatt to write several columns for the Houston Informer. Concerned with discrimination against blacks in the post office, where a worker had to be a clerk before promotion to a supervisory position and where blacks were systematically excluded from such positions, Sweatt challenged these practices in his capacity as local secretary of the National Alliance of Postal Employees. After an attorney helped him prepare a documentation of their case, he became more interested in the law. By the mid-
On February 26, 1946, he met with an NAACP delegation in Austin that accompanied him to the University of Texas registrar's office, where he met with UT president Theophilus S. Painter and other university officials. After Painter explained that nothing was available for Sweatt except out-of-state scholarships, NAACP delegates contended that such a provision was unacceptable and recommended that Prairie View A&M be divorced from Texas A&M and that a graduate and professional school for blacks be established in some large urban center. Sweatt presented his college transcripts and formally requested admission to the UT law school. Painter kept the application until he could get a ruling from the attorney general, who decided to uphold the state's policy of segregation. Sweatt filed suit on May 16, 1946, against Painter and other officials in district court. On June 17, 1946, the presiding judge refused to grant the requested writ of mandamus and gave the state six months to offer African Americans an equal course of legal instruction. Six months later, though no such course yet existed, the same judge dismissed the petition, arguing that Texas A&M had passed a resolution to provide legal education for blacks and claiming the state had satisfied its legal obligation. Sweatt appealed the case, and on May 26, 1947, the Court of Civil Appeals set aside the court's ruling and remanded the case to the lower court for a new trial.

Sweatt and other blacks declined to attend an inferior, newly established law school in Austin. Meanwhile, Thurgood Marshall and other NAACP lawyers decided to challenge segregation itself, arguing that their earlier suits for equal facilities only succeeded in
producing "Jim Crow" schools. Although the NAACP lawyers had advised him before his deposition in June 1946 to consent to attend a segregated law school at Prairie View if it were equal to that of the University of Texas, they advised Sweatt by May the following year to testify that he did not believe that there could be equality under segregation. As the case passed through the courts, Sweatt participated as a speaker at NAACP fund-raising rallies at cities throughout the state, including San Antonio, Beaumont, and Austin. After the case was remanded to the district court, he went to Austin for the trial, which lasted from May 12 to 16, 1947. Although the suit attracted much attention from the New York Herald-Tribune and Life and Newsweek, it received most of its attention from the two black weeklies in Texas, the Dallas Express and the Houston Informer. The Express selected Sweatt as its 1946 Texan of the Year. The proceedings also took their toll on Sweatt: while he was working at the post office his life was threatened, vandals defaced his house, and both he and his wife received threatening notes and telephone calls at home. Already in poor health from stomach problems that had worsened after several years, Sweatt suffered ulcers and required hospitalization; before leaving the hospital he had at least one heart attack. Toward the end of 1947 he resigned from the post office. Carter Wesley gave him work in the Informer's circulation department, a job he kept for nearly a year before returning to the postal service.
After their petition was denied and after the Court of Civil Appeals and the Texas Supreme Court reaffirmed the lower court's ruling, Sweatt and his attorneys took their case to the United States Supreme Court, which in November 1949 granted the petitioners' writ of certiorari. The case was decided in June 1950. The court concluded that black law students were not offered substantial quality in educational opportunities and that Sweatt could therefore not receive an equal education in a separate law school. Surrounded by photographers, Sweatt registered at the UT law school on September 19, 1950. By this time, he was emotionally and physically exhausted. Moreover, he required an appendectomy that caused him to miss classes for several weeks. While such physical and emotional problems contributed toward his poor performance and failing grades, they also created tension between him and his wife, who eventually returned to Houston and divorced Sweatt. By the summer of 1952, Sweatt gave up law school and returned to Houston; however, he received a scholarship to study at the Atlanta University Graduate School of Social Work and earned a master's degree there in the field of community organizations in 1954. He then moved to Cleveland, where he worked for the NAACP and the National Urban League for eight years before returning to Atlanta and becoming assistant director of the Urban League's southern regional office. During his twenty-three years with the Urban League, Sweatt worked in a variety of projects, ranging from voter registration drives to the study and establishment of programs for southern blacks migrating to the North. He also taught classes at Atlanta University.

Sweatt was married in 1963 to Katherine Gaffney; with her he had a daughter and adopted another. He died on October 3, 1982, and was cremated in Atlanta. He is not only remembered for the famous lawsuit but is considered responsible for the establishment of Texas State University for Negroes (later renamed Texas Southern University), a college for blacks that included a law school. Additionally, in 1987 the University of Texas at Austin inaugurated the Heman Sweatt Symposium in Civil Rights.
an annual conference. That same year, the UT Little Campus was renamed the Heman Sweatt Campus, and a $10,000 scholarship in Sweatt's memory was established in the UT law school. See also CIVIL-RIGHTS MOVEMENT.
Hortense Ward, champion of women's rights, suffrage leader, admitted to the Texas bar, the daughter of Frederick and Marie Louise (LaBauve) Sparks, was born in Matagorda County on July 21, 1872. Ward lived in Edna as a child, and later attended Nazareth Academy, a Catholic convent school in Victoria. She returned to Edna in 1890 to teach school, and on January 5, 1891, married Albert Malsch, with whom she had three daughters. Ward moved to Houston in 1903, and, while working as a stenographer and court reporter, became interested in studying law. She and Malsch were divorced in 1906, and on August 12, 1909, she married Houston attorney William Henry Ward, later a county judge.

In 1910, after successfully passing the bar examination, Ward became one of the first women admitted to the Texas State Bar (after Edith Locke in 1902 and Alice Tiernan in 1909). She received her law license on August 30, 1910, and began practicing with her husband in the civil law firm of Ward and Ward. Though many biographical sources assert that she did not appear in court, apparently she did argue some cases, including a lawsuit in the Seventeenth District Court in Fort Worth in 1915, as reported in the Wichita Daily Times. She concentrated much of her work, however, to writing briefs and consultations. In 1915 she and her husband were admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court; she was the first woman from Texas and possibly the South to do so.

Hortense Ward became known as a champion of women's rights, writing stirring newspaper articles and pamphlets, and personally lobbying for many social reform measures in the early 1900s. She worked to get the Married Woman's Property Law of
1913 passed by the Texas Legislature. She also campaigned for a fifty-four-hour week for women in industry, a women's division in the state department of labor, a domestic relations court, and the right of women to serve as officers of corporations. In 1915, Ward became the first southern lawyer accepted into the Women Lawyers Association, and was elected vice president and associate editor of *Women Lawyers' Journal* only six months later. She was an ardent prohibitionist and coauthored the state prohibition constitutional amendment in 1919. Ward helped *Minnie Fisher Cunningham* campaign for *woman suffrage*. She helped lead an intense lobbying campaign of Houston businessmen, local officials, and the Texas Congressional delegation in 1917 on behalf of the federal woman suffrage amendment, which narrowly passed the United States House in January 1918 with six of the eighteen Texas congressmen voting in the affirmative. As president of the Houston Equal Suffrage Association in 1918, she was sent to Austin by the state suffrage organization to help lobby Governor *William P. Hobby* and the legislature on behalf of a bill allowing women to vote in state primary elections, which passed in March 1918. Her newspaper articles on voting requirements and a pamphlet, "Instructions for Women Voters," distributed statewide, were part of a grassroots campaign by the *Texas Equal Suffrage Association* that persuaded nearly 386,000 women to register to vote in just seventeen days in the summer of 1918. On June 27, 1918, Hortense Ward became the first woman in Harris County history to register to vote. That same year she became the first woman to be appointed as secretary of the Texas Industrial Accident Board.

Ward remained politically active in the next decade. She led the Houston women's organization for William P. Hobby against *James E. Ferguson* in the 1918 governor's race and campaigned statewide for the full suffrage amendment, which was narrowly defeated in May 1919. In 1924 she supported Ferguson's wife, *Miriam Amanda Ferguson*, for governor because she supported *prohibition* and opposed the *Ku Klux*
Klan. Representing Mrs. Ferguson, Ward traveled to Maine to campaign against the Klan candidate for governor there. At the request of the Democratic National Committee, she made speeches in the East during the election year of 1924. She campaigned for Oscar Underwood of Alabama for president in 1924 and Al Smith in 1928. She herself ran unsuccessfully for county judge in 1920 and was appointed temporary judge of the Corporation Court by the city of Houston in August 1923; she was the first woman to receive any such appointment in that city. In January 1925 Hortense Ward was appointed by Governor Pat Neff to be chief justice of the All-Woman Supreme Court convened to hear the case of Johnson v. Darr. The case involved a lien on two parcels of land in El Paso County belonging to the Woodmen of the World. The supreme court justices at the time disqualified themselves from the case because of their membership in the all-male fraternal organization. The governor then appointed three women attorneys as justices: Hortense Ward, Ruth Brazzil of Galveston (see ROOME, RUTH BRAZZIL) and Hattie L. Henenberg of Dallas. The case raised the issue of whether a trust instrument must be recorded to be effective against a lien holder. The women on the court held two sessions, one in which they determined that the court had jurisdiction in the case, and another in which they affirmed the ruling of the lower court.

Hortense Ward was at one time vice president of the Woman Lawyers' Association and was a charter member of the Houston Heights Woman’s Club. She was also active in the Women's Advertising Club of Houston, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and the Sorosis Club. She was a frequent contributor to the national publication, the Woman Lawyer's Journal. Ward practiced law until the death of her husband in 1939. She
died on December 5, 1944, at St. Joseph Infirmary in Houston. She was buried in Hollywood Cemetery in Houston and was survived by one daughter and eight grandchildren. Her son-in-law, John H. Crooker, was a partner in the law firm of Fulbright and Crooker, which grew into the prominent Houston firm of Fulbright and Jaworski. Her grandson, John H. Crooker, Jr., and great-grandson, John H. Crooker III, were also practicing attorneys. A Texas Historical Marker was dedicated in Ward’s honor at Hollywood Cemetery on April 30, 2011.
Alexander Erichson, lawman, was born in Houston in 1846 to noted gunsmith and locksmith Gustave Erichson and his wife Barbara (Benitz) Erichson. Gustave owned a gunsmith and locksmith shop on Milam Street. Alexander was one of seven children: (in order of birth) Matilda (Erichson) Wichmann, Otto, Alexander, Gustave, Theodore W., Albert, and Anna (Erichson) Wichmann.

All of the Erichson sons were trained in the trade of gunsmithing by their father. At the age of seventeen, Alexander Erichson (who claimed to be nineteen) enlisted in the Confederate Army in January 1863. He served in Capt. Andrew I. Henby’s Company B, Second Texas Infantry. On June 25, 1864, he and his older Brother Otto were assigned to the J. H. Dance and Company (see DANCE BROTHERS), a firearms manufacturer, likely because of their experience as gunsmiths.

Alexander Erichson served as a public servant in multiple capacities. According to his obituary, Erichson began his career as a lawman under Houston city marshal Capt. A. K. Taylor, then was elected to the position of city marshal in January 1877. In 1878 Erichson was elected constable. In 1882 he was elected Harris County clerk and won the office again in 1884 and in 1886. He was again Houston city marshal from 1892 to 1894.

Erichson was one of three brothers who had careers as lawmen. His older brother Otto was a police officer, and his younger brother Albert was a Harris County sheriff. His brothers-in-law were also lawmen; his sister Matilda was married to Charles “Carl” Wichman, who also served as Houston city marshal, and Anne was married to Officer Henry Wichman.
The most notable event in Erichson’s career as city marshal occurred on May 15, 1877, when he was involved in a Wild West-style gunfight on Main Street in downtown Houston with infamous outlaw Matt Woodlief. According to Dr. S. O. Young’s account in his book, *True Stories of Old Houston and Houstonians: Historical and Personal Sketches*, Woodlief was the son of a prominent doctor and his family was “one of the best and most prominent in Texas.” Young described Woodlief as being “a very handsome fellow. Tall, with hair and mustache inclined to be blonde and…steel grey eyes.”

Woodlief was a professional gambler who arrived in Houston in 1873. He started a fight in a saloon on the day of the shooting. Erichson arrived and arrested Woodlief, who handed over his gun and was willingly escorted to the jail by the marshal. While in jail, however, Woodlief became a less willing prisoner. According to Young’s account, after he was bailed out, Woodlief began to verbally abuse Erichson and made personal attacks. Erichson lost his temper and challenged Woodlief to make good on the promised attack.

Woodlief left the police office, purchased a *Colt revolver* at a nearby gunsmith, and went looking for the marshal at the police headquarters. Erichson saw Woodlief approach with a drawn gun and drew his own. They advanced on each other in the street and fired. The men emptied their guns, and both were critically injured. According to a brief account in the *Austin Weekly Statesman*, Erichson was shot “once through the lower part of the hip” and Woodlief was “shot three times through the body.” In early August 1877 a grand jury indicted Woodlief for assault and intent to murder Erichson, and he was arrested and placed under a $1,000 bond. The jury found Woodlief guilty of only aggravated assault and assessed him a fine of $250.
Erichson was involved in another notorious battle in 1887 when he was a member of a Houston posse organized by his brother, then Harris County Deputy Sheriff Albert Erichson. The posse pursued a notorious band of horse thieves that had been terrorizing the area up and down the Houston and Texas Central Railway line. Alexander Erichson was Harris County clerk at the time. Newspapers across the country followed the chase. Ultimately, the thieves escaped.

Alexander Erichson married Mrs. Nannie A. Gum in 1874. They had four children: Charles E., Fred, Alexander Jr., and Annie E. He also adopted Nannie’s four children from a previous marriage. Erichson died on November 3, 1900, shortly after becoming an invalid due to the bullet lodged in his thighbone from the shootout thirteen years earlier. He was buried in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston.
Part VI: Arts and Culture

“A City Full of Vitality”

“Houston is a city full of vitality.”—*Houston: City of Destiny* edited by Fred Nahas

Houston is certainly a creative and lively city, and if, as Henri Matisse said, “creativity requires courage,” then it can also be said that Houston is a truly *courageous* city.

The stories you’ll discover in this section are a small sampling of the many thousands of ways individuals who found themselves in Houston one way or another – whether born here or somehow compelled by an external force – have generated magnificent expressions of the human spirit, capturing not just local but national and international attention and acclaim.

Some of our greatest luminaries achieved that greatness in the face of incredible adversity. For instance, in 1950 John Biggers, a critically acclaimed artist with a Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State who came to Houston to establish the art department at what is now known as Texas Southern University (TSU), was not permitted to attend a reception in his honor at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, after winning an award for his drawing *The Cradle* because he was black.

Some were pioneers: “Do you want a new theater for Houston?” Nina Vance sent 214 postcards with these words in October 1947 in her push to create a new regional theater. From that first step arose the culmination of her dream: the Tony-Award winning Alley Theatre.
Others explored the outer edges of human perception for fun and profit. The Love Street Light Circus Feel Good Machine was one of the first venues dedicated to the psychedelic music scene and held performances by bands such as Red Krayola, Bubble Puppy, and the first performance of ZZ Top in 1969.

And still others were just plain determined, ready to manifest whatever it was their imagination could conjure up, no matter how wild the idea might be. Case in point: Judge Roy Hofheinz’s Astrodome, the “Eighth Wonder of the World” and granddaddy to modern sports arenas everywhere.

This trend is sure to continue with our burgeoning status as the number one most diverse municipal region in America. The future is bright for this wildly creative town, building on the abundant history of artists who propelled their own voices into the wide world.

- Cecelia Ottenweller
Nina Vance, founder and artistic director of the Alley Theatre in Houston, the only child of Calvin Perry and Minerva (DeWitt) Whittington, was born on October 22, 1914, in Yoakum, Texas. She was descended directly from Green DeWitt and Benjamin Beeson. She began her theater training at Texas Christian University and earned the B.A. in 1935. She continued postgraduate work in theater at the American Academy of Dramatic Art, Columbia University, and the University of Southern California. In 1939 Nina Whittington moved to Houston, where she taught drama and speech at Jefferson Davis High School and later at San Jacinto High School. She also taught private acting classes and by 1941 was acting herself with the Houston Little Theatre and the Houston Community Players, an amateur group headed by Margaret Virginia (Margo) Jones. She married an attorney, Milton Vance, but the childless marriage eventually ended in divorce. After Jones left Houston, Nina Vance was asked to teach adult acting classes for the Jewish Community Center, but instead she offered her services as a director of plays. She was raised a Presbyterian, but she stipulated that the participants in her Players Guild could be of any religious denomination. Vance directed over a dozen productions for the Players Guild between 1945 and 1947, and following the innovative lead of Margo Jones, her troupe performed in the round in such places as the Rice and Lamar hotels. When the Players Guild disbanded for financial reasons, Vance and her group of theater enthusiasts were without a home. In the summer of 1947 her friends Vivien and Bob Altfeld had the idea to produce plays in Vivien's dance studio. Vance agreed to direct, and at the group's first meeting in October over 100 people interested in a new amateur theater for Houston attended. The group voted on a name, and the Alley Theatre was born.
Under the leadership of Nina Vance, from its modest beginnings in an eighty-five-seat theater that had to be converted and struck for every performance, the Alley Theatre grew to be one of the most prestigious nonprofit resident theaters in the United States. When the fire marshal forced the group to close its doors in 1948, the theater reopened in a converted fan factory that remained its home until 1968. In 1960 the Alley was one of the first recipients of a Ford Foundation grant to support a resident acting company. In 1962 the foundation awarded $2.1 million more to the Alley to construct a new theater in downtown Houston and provide operating expenses for its first decade. The opening of the new Alley Theatre in November 1968 was a nationally chronicled event. Since then the Alley Theatre has continued to uphold its position as one of the nation's pioneering and leading nonprofit resident theaters. Nina Vance was responsible for the Alley Theatre's success. She fought for its early advancement to professionalism and in 1954 made the irreversible decision to "go equity"-to turn her theater into a unionized group of professionals rather than to remain in amateur status. Starting with Season with Ginger in 1950, she championed the cause of new plays and produced many world premieres, including The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds in 1965. She was also an advocate of a repertoire of American and European classics. Moreover, Vance herself directed more than 100 plays during her tenure at the Alley.

Her participation was also instrumental in the development of the resident theater as a national movement. She was one of the founding members of the Theatre Communications Group, a networking organization for professional regional theaters, in 1961. The same year, President John F. Kennedy invited her to serve on the advisory committee of the proposed National Culture Center, and in 1963 Secretary of State Dean Rusk appointed her to the advisory committee on the arts of the United States Advisory Commission on International Education and Cultural Affairs. As early as 1958 Vance received her first personal grant from the Houston branch of the English
Speaking Union to observe and report on theater conditions in England. The Ford Foundation awarded her a director's grant for travel and study in 1959, and in 1974 she was the recipient of a special "artistic director's discretionary fund" prize from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In 1969 the University of St. Thomas in Houston awarded Vance an honorary doctor of letters degree. In 1977 she was one of eight American directors invited by the United States Department of State, the Russian Ministry of Culture, and the Soviet copyright agency, VAAP, to observe Russian theatrical productions in Moscow and Leningrad. As a result she invited Galina Volchek, artistic director of the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow, to restage her production of the Russian play Echelon in Houston with Alley actors. The American premiere of Echelon in 1978 was the first instance of such a project and a highlight of Vance's career. After a long struggle with cancer, Nina Vance died on February 18, 1980, in Houston. She was buried at Masonic Cemetery in Gonzales, Texas. At a memorial tribute in March of that year, her theater was renamed the Nina Vance Alley Theatre.
Love Street Light Circus Feel Good Machine, also known simply as Love Street, was located on Commerce Street near Allen’s Landing at the edge of Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston. Built in the 1930s for the Sunset Coffee Company, the tile three-story structure still stands at Allen’s Landing. Shaped as an irregular pentagon due to the river, the building was used for storage throughout the 1950s. In 2008 the building was part of a redevelopment plan for Allen’s Landing.

Opened by David Adickes on June 3, 1967, Love Street quickly became a hot spot for psychedelic nightlife in Houston and remained so through the last years of the decade. Later in 1967 Cliff Carlin became the manager, and eventually owned the venue. Love Street was one of the first venues opened in Texas dedicated to the psychedelic music scene. The club provided tables or the Zonk Out (a room containing cushions with backrests) for the audiences as well as light shows during performances. Love Street hosted a number of psychedelic music groups, including the Red Krayola, the 13th Floor Elevators, Bubble Puppy, Shiva’s Headband, Fever Tree, Moving Sidewalks, and American Blues. The venue also hosted well-known musical ensembles outside the psychedelic genre,
including Johnny Winter and ZZ Top. Love Street was the site of ZZ Top’s first shows in 1969.

By 1969 a portion of Love Street was owned by the International Artists label. International Artists was a Houston-based record label operating from 1965 to 1970 and had a large list of Texas psychedelic bands as well as other groups as part of their lineup. Plans were made to expand into San Antonio and Corpus Christi, however, both of these ventures were short-lived, and the original Houston Love Street closed on June 6, 1970. In 2004 the band Fall Guys recorded a song, “Love Street Light Circus Feelgood Machine,” on their album Another Place…Another Time to commemorate Love Street.
John Thomas Biggers, African-American artist and educator, was born at Gastonia, North Carolina, on April 13, 1924, to Cora and Paul Biggers. His father—part Anglo, African American, and Cherokee—made his career as a teacher and principal but also worked as a shoemaker and served as a Baptist minister. His mother was often employed as a domestic worker.

In 1941 Biggers began college at the Hampton Institute, later renamed Hampton University, with the intention of becoming a plumber. After taking a class from Viktor Lowenfeld, a Jewish refugee who had fled Austria before World War II, Biggers began studying art. In May 1943 he was drafted into the United States Navy. John remained at the Hampton Institute as a "visual art specialist" where his job was to make models of military machinery that were used for training purposes. Also in 1943 Biggers was featured in the landmark exhibit Young Negro Art at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1945 Biggers, who had been transferred to the naval base at Norfolk, chose to be admitted to the naval hospital in Philadelphia instead of returning from leave. He was admitted to the psychiatric ward for observation, and a month later John Biggers was released from the Navy with an honorable discharge, pronounced temperamentally unfit for service.

Biggers returned to Hampton in the spring of 1946 but transferred to Pennsylvania State University when Lowenfeld accepted a job in their art department. While attending Pennsylvania State he received a bachelor's degree in art education in January 1948, a
master's degree in art education in September 1948, and a doctorate in education in 1954. In 1948 John Biggers married Hazel Hales whom he had been introduced to at the Hampton Institute six years earlier. Biggers taught for a year at Pennsylvania State and a summer at Alabama State University before moving to Houston in 1949 to found the art department at the Texas State University for Negroes (which was renamed Texas Southern University in 1951). In 1950 John won a contest at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, for his drawing, The Cradle. The museum, which permitted blacks only on Thursdays, did not allow Biggers to be present at a reception in his honor. Biggers won the Neiman Marcus Company Prize at the Dallas Museum of Art in 1952 for his drawing, Sleeping Boy. The reception scheduled for him was mysteriously canceled; instead a representative of the museum handed Biggers his prize check when he arrived.

In 1957 John Biggers spent six months traveling to Ghana, Togo, Dahomey (now the Republic of Benin), and Nigeria on a UNESCO fellowship. He produced a book titled Ananse: The Web of Life in Africa (1962), which combined drawings with narrative text he had written while in Africa. Ananse was a significant contribution to both art and literature because it gave Americans, particularly African Americans, one of the first realistic views of Africa and African culture. In 1967 Biggers was named a Distinguished Professor at Texas Southern University where he would remain until his retirement in 1983. The Art League of Houston named John Biggers "Texas Artist of the Year" in 1988. That same year he received an Achievement
As an artist Biggers is best known for his murals, although he was also well respected for his drawings, prints, and sculpture. His influences, including African art and Southern African-American culture, are clearly visible in his art. In the 1940s Biggers portrayed social realism by painting what he saw as a young African American. His art transformed during the 1950s, particularly after his trip to Africa, when he began painting pictures that portrayed traditional African culture. As Biggers aged, his murals became more abstract and symbolic. His works often contained shotgun houses, churches, or railroads, which were symbolic of black culture, spiritual rebirth, and travel. John Biggers died of a heart attack on January 25, 2001, at his home in Houston, Texas. His legacy remains visible in the murals that can be found on the walls of libraries, colleges, and other public buildings in Houston and throughout the South.

Award from the Metropolitan Arts Foundation. A year later, he was featured in the major traveling exhibit, *Black Art—Ancestral Legacy: The African Impulse in African-American Art*, which was presented in Dallas, Atlanta, Milwaukee, and Richmond. In his retirement Biggers established a second residence and studio in his childhood home of Gastonia where he had a renewed interest in sculpture. In 1990 he received an honorary doctor of letters degree from Hampton University. Between 1990 and 1992 Biggers painted two murals at Hampton University, and in 1994 he completed drawings for Maya Angelou's poem, "Our Grandmothers."

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John Biggers. Courtesy of the University of North Texas College of Visual Arts and Design.
The Astrodome, the first fully air-conditioned, enclosed, domed, multipurpose sports stadium in the world, was officially named Harris County Domed Stadium when it opened in April 1965. On average, more than four million persons visited the Astrodome each year between 1965 and 2000. It has been used for major-league baseball, major-league soccer, professional and collegiate football, championship boxing, Portuguese-style bullfighting, rodeos, polo, collegiate basketball, special concerts, conventions, and religious meetings. The Astrodome is the prototype of numerous sports structures, including the Superdome in New Orleans, the Kingdome in Seattle, and the Silverdome in Pontiac, Michigan.

The first tangible efforts toward building the innovative stadium were made when the Harris County Park Commission was established by the Fifty-fifth Texas Legislature. The bill enabled Harris County to submit a revenue-bond issue to property owners for a Houston sports center. Voters approved the issue by a vote of more than three to one on July 26, 1958. Later, the idea of having an all-purpose covered stadium was developed through the leadership of Roy M. Hofheinz, and it was determined that a new bond issue should be held to authorize general-obligation bonds. On January 31, 1961, the voters of Harris County
approved a general obligation bond issue of $22 million. Ground was broken on January 3, 1962. After excavation work was completed it was found that more money was needed to complete the structure. On December 22, 1962, another bond issue of $9 million was approved by Harris County property owners. Although there were two lawsuits and other delays, construction on the stadium itself started on March 18, 1963, and was completed two years later. The stadium structure itself cost $20 million but the overall cost was more than $40 million of which $31.6 million came from two county bond issues and $3.75 million from the state highway department and the city of Houston for off-site improvements, including paved streets, bridges, and storm sewers. The Houston Sports Association, which leased the stadium from the county for forty years, added $6 million for expensive apartments, restaurants, cushioned seats, and a $2 million scoreboard.

The first event in the Astrodome was held on April 9, 1965, when the Houston Astros played the New York Yankees in exhibition baseball. The first football game was played in the Astrodome on September 11, 1965, when Tulsa University defeated the University of Houston by a score of 14–0. Professional football established itself in the Astrodome when the Houston Oilers began playing all of their home games there after a preseason exhibition game with the Washington Redskins on August 1, 1968. Seating capacity of
the Astrodome for baseball was 52,000, for football about 62,000, and for some events, 66,000. Temperature was a constant 73°F, with humidity at 50 percent. There were five restaurants. The stadium has a clear span of 642 feet, an inside height of 208 feet, a lighting maximum of 300 footcandles, an air-filtering system of activated charcoal, and a man-made field cover called Astroturf. Hofheinz ordered the plastic roof painted because outfielders had trouble tracking fly balls during daylight in the bright glare and criss-cross network of girders overhead. The lack of sunlight kills the grass, but the Chemstrand Company, then experimenting with an outdoor artificial carpet, produced what came to be called AstroTurf. Hofheinz, starting in 1966, used this instead of natural grass. Over time, questions were raised about injuries suffered from the harder surface, although numerous other stadiums elected to use it.

In 1988 and 1989 the dome underwent a $100 million renovation. Seating was expanded by 10,000, seventy-two luxury boxes were built, and four cylindrical pedestrian ramps were added to the exterior of the structure. As well as being the one-time home for both the Houston Astros and Houston Oilers, the stadium has also hosted the United States Football League Houston Gamblers, World Football League Houston Texans, and the University of Houston Cougars. Annual events included the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Other notable events include the 1966 heavyweight title fight between Muhammad Ali and Cleveland Williams, the 1968 "Game of the Century" between the UCLA Bruins and the University of Houston Cougars, and the 1973 "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs. The stadium also hosted the MLB All-Star Game in 1968 and 1986, the 1971 NCAA Final Four, and the 1989 NBA All-Star Game. In 1992 the Republican party held its national convention at the dome.
Since the late 1990s the Astrodome has experienced a marked decline in use as long-time tenants have relocated to newer venues. The Oilers moved to Tennessee after the 1996 season. The Astros played their last game in the Astrodome on October 9, 1999, after which they moved to the newly constructed Enron Field (now Minute Maid Park), a baseball-only facility, to begin the 2000 season. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo relocated to a new venue after 2002, and the dome's last live concert took place in February 2003. When the NFL returned to Houston in 2002, the Houston Texans opened their inaugural season at Reliant Stadium (now NRG Stadium) next door. The Astrodome's final permanent tenant was the Houston Energy of the Women's Professional Football League, who last played there in 2006. In September 2005 the Astrodome served as a temporary emergency shelter for thousands of displaced New Orleans residents after Hurricane Katrina.

In 2009 the Astrodome was permanently closed to the public after the Houston Fire Marshal's Office cited numerous code violations. Since then, proposals to demolish the stadium have competed with a variety of plans to renovate and redevelop the structure into either a luxury hotel, convention space, movie production studio, mall, aquarium, or indoor park. The most ambitious proposal, a $217 million bond measure to convert the dome into a multi-purpose event facility, was rejected by popular referendum in November 2013. To protect against renewed calls for demolition, local preservation groups successfully lobbied to have the Astrodome added to the National Register of Historic Places in January 2014. Then, in September 2016, the Harris County Commissioners Court voted unanimously to approve a $105 million revitalization plan. The first phase of the project will convert underground portions
of the stadium into a multi-level parking structure with space for 1,400 vehicles, leaving nine acres of above-ground, indoor floor space available for commercial redevelopment. As of March 2017 construction has not begun; the stadium remains vacant, and is only accessible to maintenance crews. On January 27, 2017, the Texas Historical Commission designated the Astrodome a State Antiquities Landmark, thus making any future alterations to the structure subject to approval from the state government.

$105 Million Project to Modify the Astrodome. Courtesy of the Harris County Engineering Department.
Club Terpsicore, a social club for Mexican-American women in Houston, was founded in 1937 by María Medrano, Edelia Cantú, Catalina and Virginia Gómez, and Hortensia and Lupe Quintanilla. It provided its members with social and recreational opportunities and also served the community. The club, named after Terpsichore, the mythological muse of dance, sponsored elaborate dances to raise money for various charities, among them the Salvation Army and the local tuberculosis ward. Members met once a week at the Cantú Photography Studios on Preston and Fannin streets to plan their activities. Membership in the club was limited to thirteen. Potential members were accepted on the basis of their "character." Members came from both working-class and middle-class families and from various areas of the city. They had to be single. Most of the young women were in their late teens and early twenties. Many of them had graduated from high school and worked as sales clerks or assisted their parents in the family business. A few worked as secretaries, a prestigious occupation for women in the community, since few employers hired secretaries of Mexican descent. The dances, with themes such as "A Night in Old Mexico," "Hawaiian Night," and the annual "White Ball," were held in some of the most elegant ballrooms in the city, among them the University Club, the Shiners' Hall, and the Empire Room of the Rice Hotel, which by the late 1930s had begun to rent to Mexican Americans. Their guests came from other clubs in the city: the Club Cultural Recreativo México Bello, the Club Internacional, the Club...
Tenochtitlán, the Club Chapultepec, and the Club Gardenia. The Mexican consul attended all their functions, as did the entire consular corps in Houston. The Club Terpsicore disbanded during World War II.

Club Terpsicore Members at the White Ball (1939). Courtesy of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center and the Portal to Texas History.
June Arnold, lesbian feminist activist, author, and publisher, daughter of Robert Cowan Davis and Cad Carter (Wortham) Davis, was born in Greenville, South Carolina, on October 27, 1926. After the death of her father in 1938, Arnold's family relocated to her mother's hometown of Houston, Texas. She attended Kinkaid School in Houston and the Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, and made her debut at the Allegro Club ball in 1947. She attended Vassar College in 1943–44 but returned to Houston and completed her B.A. at Rice Institute (now Rice University) in 1948. She earned a master's degree in literature at Rice in 1958.

June Arnold married Rice classmate Gilbert Harrington Arnold on February 3, 1951, in Houston. The couple had five children before they divorced in 1959. Tragically, their first son, Gilbert Harrington Arnold, Jr., drowned while swimming at the Bayou Club in Houston in 1960.

Arnold remarried on February 26, 1960, to Sarel Henry Eimerl, a native of Chester, England, who also attended Rice. She subsequently moved with her children to Greenwich Village in New York City, where Eimerl worked as a writer and editor. The marriage was short-lived, but Arnold remained in New York to pursue a writing career and study writing at the New School for Social Research. During this time, Arnold also became very active in the women's liberation and lesbian separatist movements. Although she reportedly considered her writing career as secondary, she completed four...
novels, the last two of which drew high praise. In 1967 her first novel, *Applesauce*, was published by McGraw-Hill. The book reflected the author's personal experiences, including her life in Houston and the Rice University area, but it also examined changes in personalities that occur when people marry. Following *Applesauce* Arnold moved to rural Vermont and founded a press, Daughters, Incorporated, with partner Parke Bowman. Daughters focused on publishing works that chronicled lesbian experiences, and featured works by several notable feminist authors, including Rita Mae Brown, Bertha Harris, Monique Wittig, and Joanna Russ. The press also published two novels by Arnold: *The Cook and the Carpenter*, which appeared in 1973 under the pseudonym Carpenter, and *Sister Gin*, which came out in 1975. Additionally, Arnold contributed to a number of periodicals, including the *Village Voice*, *Houston Post*, *Quest*, *Plexus*, *Amazon Quarterly*, *Sinister Wisdom*, and *Sister Courage*. She was also a member of the National Organization for Women and the *Texas Institute of Letters*.

Arnold was a principal organizer of the first Women in Print conference, which met in Omaha, Nebraska, in August 1976. Drawing together women from publishing houses, magazines, newspapers, bookstores, printing companies, and distribution services, the conference has been credited with significantly advancing the development of media branches within the women's movement. In the early 1980s she returned to Houston to write a novel recreating her mother's life and time. Her efforts resulted in both a compelling story of a mother-daughter relationship and a richly detailed picture of Houston as a small southern city in the first half of the twentieth-century. Arnold died of cancer in Houston on March 11, 1982. Her final manuscript was published posthumously as *Baby Houston* in 1987. Her second novel, *The Cook and the Carpenter*, was republished by New York University Press in 1995 and is widely considered a classic of feminist fiction.
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