



# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, September 2, 2009

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## LaPlante longtime State Archivist, Director retires from Texas State Library and Archives Commission

**AUSTIN, Texas** – Christopher LaPlante, the State Archivist and Director of Archives and Information Services Division of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) for over 24 years retired effective August 31, 2009. LaPlante worked for the agency for over 35 years.

LaPlante began his career at TSLAC in 1974 as a Processing Archivist. He served as the Assistant Director of the Archives from 1975 until 1985 and State Archivist and Director of the Archives and Information Services Division from 1985 to 2009, achieving a record of the longest tenure of a state archivist at 24 years.

“I won’t be a stranger because I have spent so many years in this place, it is like a second home to me,” said LaPlante. “I have a passion for the people and the items that are preserved here and it was an honor to work with so many great people and be surrounded by such important items on a daily basis.”

As the Texas State Archivist, his accomplishments include creating higher visibility for TSLAC on a state and national level providing professional development and professional activities for TSLAC archivists in local, state and national organizations; sponsoring the E-Records Conference for 10 years; creating with the Texas Historical Commission the Historic Texas Flags Historical Restoration Project and Exhibit; increasing disaster planning and training for Texas archivists; creating partnerships among cultural heritage, emergency management, and first responder communities in Texas; and achieving accessibility to and the preservation of numerous Texas records including Texas maps, county records, voter lists, Republic of Texas claims, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice’s Convict Record Ledgers, Civil War Records and Pensions, and more.

Other highlights of his tenure include retaining the papers of Texas Governors in the public domain and the recovery of stolen documents. He also sought the Attorney General’s opinions, contacted previous governors and universities to keep gubernatorial papers in the public trust. Since 1985 he increased awareness of missing archival documents, and their recovery, creating and distributing a master list of stolen documents. His attempts were chronicled in many publications including *The New York Times* and *Texas Monthly*.

“Chris has done so much for this agency and for the state of Texas,” said Peggy D. Rudd, state librarian and director for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. “He is a champion for the protection of the state’s historical documents and has devoted his entire career to acquiring, protecting and securing these Texas treasures.”

LaPlante, in his role as Coordinator of the Texas Historical Records Advisory Board (THRAB), promoted the preservation of state and local government records in Texas. LaPlante devoted his time and energy in public service to his fellow colleagues in many ways: becoming a Fellow of The Texas State Genealogical Society in 1976; coauthoring

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*Director and Librarian*  
Peggy D. Rudd

*Assistant State Librarian*  
Edward Seidenberg

*Making  
information  
work  
for all  
Texans*

*It's Your Heritage: The Archives of Texas in 1977*; submitting testimony to The Assassination Records Review Board under the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 in 1994; conducting numerous workshops on archival topics. He served on the State of Texas Alliance for Response Taskforce, the START Core Planning Group for Safeguarding Our Cultural Heritage, 2004-2009, the Texas Heritage Digital Initiative Steering Committee, 2004-2009 and the Connecting to Collections, Grant Oversight Committee, 2009.

LaPlante received his bachelor's degree from the University of Dallas and in 1974 he earned his master's degree in history from the University of Texas at Arlington. Chris has been married to his wife Wanda for 37 years.

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**Attached photo caption:** Texas State Library and Archives Commission Chairman Sandra J. Pickett presents Christopher LaPlante with a bust of Sam Houston from the Atascosito Historical Society, in tribute to his 35 years of service and friendship to TSLAC. LaPlante retired as the State Archivist and Director of Archives and Information Services Division of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, a position that he has held for the last 24 years. He retired on August 31, 2009. *(Photo by Peggy Lee Oster / Communications Office - Texas State Library and Archives Commission).*

#### **ABOUT THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION**

*TSLAC helps Texans find the information they seek. The people of Texas utilize TSLAC services and programs to effectively use information and materials that improve their lives, the lives of their families, and their communities. Since 1909, TSLAC has carried out a commitment of making information work for all Texans by providing history and genealogical services, federal and state government documents, electronic research, and library services to Texans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical, or reading disabilities. For more information, go to [www.tsl.state.tx.us](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us) or email [pio@tsl.state.tx.us](mailto:pio@tsl.state.tx.us).*