

**Texas State Library and Archives Commission
Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center
Acquisition Policy**

Approved: November 1, 2013

Effective: December 1, 2013

The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center serves as the state's official regional historical resource depository for the ten southeast Texas counties of Chambers, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto and Tyler. A component of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's (TSLAC) Archives and Information Services Division (ARIS), the Center's primary mission is to collect, preserve and provide access to historically significant state and local government records and publications of the designated region and secondarily to serve as a library of Texana and genealogical resources. Through its collections, historic buildings and educational exhibits and initiatives, it also honors the distinguished public service of former governors, organizations and citizens of the historic Atascosito District.

In operation since 1973, the Center is the direct result of a community and area wide effort to preserve the history of Southeast Texas and provide a centralized place for its study. Local citizens, businesses and organizations provided the land and funds needed to construct a building for the Center in 1977. The site in Liberty, Texas was chosen due to the city's early history as the location of the 1756 Spanish outpost of Atascosito. In 1826, Atascosito became the seat of government for all, or portions, of the ten counties served by the Center. The name of the town and district changed to Liberty in 1831. The Center sits on a tract of land donated by former Governor Price Daniel and his wife Jean, which is just north of the site of Atascosito. The Center takes its name from one of the region's most significant historical figures, and Mrs. Daniel's great-great grandfather, Sam Houston.

General Collection Criteria

The Center collects materials in eight areas: state government records, local government records, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs, maps, artifacts and library materials. Only items related to Southeast Texas, defined as the counties of Chambers, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto and Tyler, are accepted, with the exception of a limited number of published library materials on the state as a whole. Subject areas of particular focus include timber, the oil industry, the Atascosito-Liberty District and contributions of significant individuals from this district, including Republic of Texas President and Governor Sam Houston, Governor Price Daniel and Congressman Martin Dies. The Center also maintains a collection on the pirate Jean Lafitte.

All materials acquired must meet accepted professional appraisal criteria. The criteria upon which items are evaluated, include, but are not limited to, the following: compliance with the acquisition policy, historical significance, provenance, condition, volume and size, potential for scholarly research and exhibition, uniqueness, format, relationship to other materials in the Center's holdings and the ability of the Center to preserve and provide access to the materials.

Materials may be acquired by gift, bequest, transfer or any transaction that passes legal title of the materials to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Materials received anonymously are considered a gift and/or abandoned property and immediately acquired by the Center on behalf of TSLAC. No materials are purchased by the Center, with the exception of a limited number of published library materials. Donation of items may be tax deductible. TSLAC will proof of donation upon request, but staff members cannot provide a monetary value for items donated. Donors should consult a professional appraiser, accountant and/or tax preparer.

Materials offered to the Center are appraised by the Acquisitions Workgroup, which consists of the Center's Manager, Librarian, and Archivist/Curator, as well as ARIS' Assistant Director for Archives and

Preservation Officer. A majority of the workgroup's members may approve acquisition of an item. The State Archivist serves as an ex-officio member.

Exceptions to this policy are made only under extraordinary circumstances and must receive unanimous approval from the workgroup.

All potential donations of materials to the Center should be submitted to the manager, who will present the item to the workgroup at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Meetings are held on a quarterly or as needed basis.

State Government Records

The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center, as part of TSLAC's Archives and Information Services Division, refers all offers of archival state records to its parent agency. The State Archivist may choose to temporarily or permanently house those archival state records related to southeast Texas, or its people, at the Center.

As defined in Section 441.180, Texas Government Code, archival state record means "a state record of enduring value that will be preserved on a continuing basis by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission or another state agency until the State Archivist indicates that based on a reappraisal of the record it no longer merits further retention."

Archival state records include records from all three branches of government and document the history of Texas government from the Colonial and Republic periods to the present. For additional details on what state government records are collected, please consult the acquisition policy of ARIS.

Local Government Records

The Regional Historical Resource Depository (RHRD) program was created by legislation approved in 1971 and amended in 1977 and 1989 to provide a "uniform, statewide system for the retention and preservation of historical resources on a manageable basis and under professional care in the region of origin or interest." Records housed at RHRDs include administrative files, documents, microfilm and similar types of records created by counties, cities, special districts, school districts and their various units.

The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center serves as the RHRD for ten counties: Chambers, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto and Tyler. The Center is the only RHRD owned and administered by TSLAC. In other areas, TSLAC maintains agreements with academic, public or other institutions to provide suitable space and staff support to provide access to the records housed at their facilities.

Due to limited storage space, local government officials are encouraged to maintain, preserve and provide proper access to the archivally valuable records they create. However, when that is not possible, the Center may accept local government records in the following areas:

- Records designated as having permanent value in the retention schedules developed by TSLAC's State and Local Records Management Division, or developed by units of local government and approved by TSLAC
- Records that best document the programs, organization, functions and other activities related to the important or significant operations of the governmental entity
- Records of enduring value because of the information contained in them
- Records that provide the most accurate, understandable and accessible source of information to researchers

- Records that document the historical development of the local government itself, of the community and of its people
- Records that have intrinsic value based upon the physical form of the record, its uniqueness or other factors arising out of its creation or use

Local government records from counties other than the ten served by the Center are not collected. In addition, the Center will not normally accept original hard copies of permanently valuable local government records if those records have been microfilmed and stored in accordance with the standards for archival records as promulgated in the “Rules Establishing Standards and Procedures for Microfilming Local Government Records” as set forth in the “Administrative Rules of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission,” (Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Chapter 7). Exceptions may be made for records that have intrinsic value based upon the physical form of the record, its uniqueness or other factors arising out of its creation or use or if it is known that the microfilm is of substandard quality.

Other Historical Records

Since the primary mission of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center is to collect, preserve, and provide access to historically significant state and local government records, the Center does not actively solicit other types of historical records, but may accept them when offered. These additional resources are accepted in a variety of formats, including, but not limited to, papers, bound volumes, pamphlets, maps, photographs, slides, negatives, postcards, newspapers, broadsides, and microforms. Formats for which the Center does not have the equipment to provide preservation, access or storage are not generally accepted, such as computer discs, born-digital materials and other electronic records.

Historical Manuscripts Collection

The Center may accept the following types of historical manuscripts:

- Private papers of public officials whose public records are in the Center
- Private papers of enduring value because of the information contained in them, especially as related to the historical development of Southeast Texas, its communities and its people
- Private papers that complement existing private records or public records in the Center, or those private papers that fill in the gaps caused by the destruction, loss or lack of information in the holdings of public records
- Private papers that relate to the Center’s special focus areas of timber, the oil industry, the Atascosito-Liberty District and contributions of significant individuals from this district, including Sam Houston, Price Daniel and Martin Dies

Photocopies or facsimile reproductions of private papers owned by individuals or other repositories are not collected by the Center. The Center must have clear legal title to any collections it is making publicly available and for which it is assuming responsibility.

Newspaper Collection

The Center may accept the following types of newspapers:

- Local and regional newspapers at least 50 years old
- Contemporary issues of one newspaper from each of the ten counties served that features county-wide news, generally the newspaper published in the county seat

Newspaper clippings are not collected by the Center.

Photograph Collection

The Center may accept the following types of photographic images:

- Photographic images produced by government agencies in the ten counties served

- Photographic images that complement or supplement existing government records or historical manuscripts housed at the Center
- Examples of early photographic imagery, such as daguerreotypes, ambrotypes and tintypes, that document photographic history in Southeast Texas
- Significant collections of images of photographers whose primary subject is Southeast Texas
- Photographic images of Southeast Texas industry and business, political events, home life, agriculture and land use, social events, architecture, transportation and tourism
- Photographic images that relate to the Center's special focus areas of timber, the oil industry, the Atascosito-Liberty District and contributions of significant individuals from this district, including Sam Houston, Price Daniel and Martin Dies

Photographic images of other counties in Texas or unrelated to Southeast Texas are not collected by the Center.

Map Collection

The Center may accept the following types of maps:

- Maps produced by state government agencies or local government agencies in the ten counties served
- General maps of Southeast Texas
- General maps of Texas and/or surrounding areas in the United States and Mexico that include all or a portion of Southeast Texas
- Town plats
- Birdseye views of Southeast Texas cities
- Street maps
- Highway and road maps
- Plans of forts, missions, presidios, battles, etc.
- County survey maps
- Military surveys or reconnaissance maps
- Coastal charts and other nautical maps
- Railroad maps
- Oil and gas maps
- Topographic, geologic or soil survey maps

Maps of other regions in Texas or of other states are not collected by the Center.

Museum Artifact Collection

The Center's artifact collection is used primarily for educational, not research, purposes. Thus, all artifacts accepted must be in a suitable condition for display, requiring no conservation or restoration work, and have strong exhibit potential. Artifacts, for the purpose of this policy, are any three-dimensional object, including, but not limited to, fine art, decorative arts, and memorabilia.

The Center may accept the following types of artifacts:

- Artifacts that complement a records collection or add to the exhibit potential of a records collection
- Artifacts that relate to the Center's special focus areas of timber, the oil industry, the Atascosito-Liberty District and contributions of significant individuals from this district, including Sam Houston, Price Daniel and Martin Dies
- Artifacts that depict a distinctive and/or unique aspect of life in Southeast Texas
- Artifacts directly connected to the history or previous occupants of the historic buildings maintained by the Center

- Artifacts commonly available or for which the Center has multiples of like kind that are to be considered non-permanent, non-archival holdings to be used for educational programming (e.g. for visitors to touch)

Artifacts that are too large or have a physical attribute that prohibits their exhibition and placement in normal storage areas, including, but not limited to, furniture, machinery and farm equipment, are not collected by the Center.

Donations of historical buildings must be reviewed by the seven-member commission that oversees operations of TSLAC. Commission members will consider the general collection criteria of this policy and any financial burden that would result from a building's acquisition when making their decision. TSLAC and the Center are prohibited from accepting any buildings that would constitute a financial obligation on behalf of the state.

Library Materials

The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center's secondary purpose is to serve as a Texana and genealogical library. The Center maintains a collection of published library materials on Texas history and government, regional genealogy and Southeast Texas. Library materials accepted must complement the Center's historical records and artifacts. Except for a select number of materials on the state as a whole, all materials relate to the ten-county area served by the Center.

The Center may accept the following types of library materials:

- Local government agency reports and publications
- Local and county histories
- Biographies and autobiographies
- Histories of Southeast Texas business, industry and economy; its institutions and organizations, arts and sciences
- City directories
- Telephone directories at least 50 years old
- Periodicals (magazines, journals, newsletters)
- Yearbooks
- M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations and theses
- Journals of Texas Congresses and legislatures
- Published copies of Texas laws and constitutions
- General Texas histories
- Current reference works on Texas and Southeast Texas
- Genealogical reference materials (e.g. censuses, cemetery records, indexes)
- Materials related to the Center's special focus areas of timber, the oil industry, the Atascosito-Liberty District and contributions of significant individuals from this district, including Sam Houston, Price Daniel and Martin Dies.
- Professional development materials that would be of assistance to staff in performing their work in the areas of library, museum and archival sciences

The Center will not accept the following types of publications:

- Federal and state government agency reports and publications, unless related to Southeast Texas
- Histories related to other states, regions in Texas or counties besides the ten served by the Center
- General works of fiction and poetry
- Photocopies of published materials
- Juvenile materials
- Out-of-date reference works
- Family histories or genealogical research collections, unless part of an incoming manuscript collection or an accretion to an existing collection

Items Not Collected

Due to limited storage space, staffing and financial resources, the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center must be selective about what materials it accepts. Only those materials that can be stored properly, processed and made available to the public in a reasonable timeframe and maintained over time will be accepted. Materials will be declined if the Center does not have the resources needed to provide professionally accepted standards of storage, preservation, conservation and access.

In addition to those items mentioned previously, the following materials will not be accepted, unless exceptional circumstances are recognized by a unanimous vote of the Acquisitions Workgroup:

- Duplicates of current holdings, unless they are in better condition than the current holdings
- Records available online or through other archival repositories in Texas
- Items on permanent, long-term or indefinite loan (The short-term loan of an item for a pre-determined amount of time in order to serve a specific purpose, such as exhibition, is acceptable and would be governed by the Center's "Incoming and Outgoing Loan Policy.")
- Items with special conditions, restrictions or encumbrances
- Items for which the donor does not have legal title
- Items more suitable for collections in other archival repositories
- Non-original items, especially photocopies and facsimile reproductions of published materials, artwork, or records available from other institutions

Donors should also note that acceptance of a collection as a whole does not obligate the Center to keep every item in the collection. If records or artifacts within the collection are determined to be unsuitable during processing, those materials will be removed. Examples of such items would include duplicate copies, items whose condition makes them unusable or endangers the rest of the collection and items unrelated to the focus of the collection.

All potential donations of materials to the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center should be submitted to the Center's manager, who will present the request to the Acquisitions Workgroup at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Meetings occur on a quarterly or as needed basis. For more information, please call 936-336-8821 or email samhoustoncenter@tsl.state.tx.us.