



WORD FAMILY DONATION — Chock Word (right) and J.P. Word have recently donated an original map of Bosque County from the General Land Office to the Bosque County Collection. The original map is currently being restored for the collection, so during the open house held last week, another original map was on display in the case for visitors to study. Shown with Word is Elizabeth Torrence, chairman of the Bosque County Collection. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton

Bosque County Collection Hosts Grand Opening At Lumpkin Building

By CAROL MOULTON
RECORD ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MERIDIAN — After many years of hard work, including fund-raisers, grant writing, renovation work, floor plans and designs, and moving from the third floor of the Bosque County Courthouse, the Bosque County Historical Commission's Collection hosted its ribbon-cutting and grand opening in the historic Lumpkin Building on Wednesday, June 13, 2001, with close to 100 persons present for the occasion.

Spearheaded from its inception in 1982 by Elizabeth Torrence, then chairman of the Bosque County Historical Commission Archives Committee, the Collection has grown to encompass much of the history of Bosque County in its multitude of stories, photographs, and family histories now preserved in one place. The new home of the collection offers not only the archives room, but a public research room, a meeting area, several display cases, and an outdoor terrace floored with bricks honoring many citizens of the past. The Lumpkin Building also boasts an elevator to the second floor research area for the handicapped.

Following the ribbon-cutting, guests were offered tours of the building and members of the Bosque County Historical Commission

were on hand to explain different areas and the multitude of research facilities housed in the building.

Visitors were able to view several new exhibits such as the John A. Lomax collection in a second-floor display case, an original map

of the county (circa 1855) donated to the Collection by Chock and J.P. Word in honor of their father Charles K Word, and an exhibit of items once owned by Bosque County Sheriff Clark Royal, donated by Marilyn Ridings.

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The Lumpkin Building was purchased by Bosque County to house the Collection in 1992, with the understanding that the Bosque County Historical Commission would repay the \$40,000 purchase price to the county and it would be responsible for the renovation and upkeep of the future home of the Collection.

Between 1993 and 1996, under the leadership of Torrence, the Friends of the Bosque County Collection, Inc. (501c3) organization was formed to raise funds for the renovation of the Lumpkin building, a master plan for the renovation of the building was formed, grants were applied for and received, and the roof, front facade and south wall of the building was renovated.

From 1996-2000, more grant applications were written along with letters to contributors, which raised the \$177,000 needed for the

renovation of the interior of the building. Architect Craig Melde designed the master plan and oversaw the interior work on the building which was completed by Ray Miller Construction Co. of Meridian.

In a report to the Bosque County Commissioners in February, 2001, Torrence said, "I have struggled for eight long years to raise money to have the building renovated and rehabilitated. I have taken the lead and have fought the fight."

On Wednesday, the pride in her accomplishments showed in Torrence's smile as she personally

welcomed everyone who visited the Collection for the grand opening.

"We can all really be proud of the hard work that has gone into this project," Torrence said. "It has taken the hard work, diligence, and financial support of many, many people — but it has all been worth it. The history of the county can be preserved here for the future."



Collection Hosts Grand Opening

BOSQUE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION HOSTS RIBBON-CUTTING — With close to 100 folks on hand for the grand opening, a ribbon-cutting was held on Wednesday, June 12, at the new home of the Bosque County Collection in the historic Lumpkin Building (background) on the courthouse square in Meridian. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton



NEW EXHIBIT — A recent donation to the Bosque County Collection offers items once owned by former Bosque County Sheriff Clark Royal. The exhibit was donated by Marilyn Ridings, shown with the exhibit. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton



HISTORY REVISITED — George Larson and Elizabeth Torrence spent some time during the grand opening of the Bosque County Collection, going over some of the historical papers now located in the new home of the Collection, the Lumpkin Building in Meridian. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton



FORMER JUDGES VISIT COLLECTION — Several former Bosque County judges were on hand for the grand opening of the Bosque County Collection held at the Lumpkin Building on Wednesday, June 13, including (from left) Chock Word, E.W. (Pete) Page, and Ernest Reinke. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton



LOMAX DISPLAY AT COLLECTION — One of several display cases at the Bosque County Collection now houses items about John A. Lomax, one of the earlier settlers of Bosque County and a collector of early cowboy music. — Staff Photo By Carol Moulton