

**Guide to the
City of Irving:
Irving Historical Museum Collection
1975-1981**

2 linear ft.

Accession Numbers: 78-01A; 78-01C; 78-01D; and 0001-135

COLLECTION NUMBER: 82

Prepared by Kevin Kendro

December 2014

CITATION: The City of Irving: Irving Historical Museum Collection, 1975-1981, Collection 82, Box number, Folder number, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Historical Sketch

As part of the City of Irving's Bicentennial celebration the Irving Bicentennial Commission created the Horizons '76 Committee that was tasked with creating a municipal historical museum. Dr. Ben Thomas and his wife Bobbie Thomas spearheaded the committee and on June 15, 1975, the museum opened in a rented store front in the Plymouth Park Shopping Center. The museum was operated by the Thomas's and a group of volunteers for two years. After Irving's Bicentennial Commission was dissolved in 1977, the Thomas's kept the museum open one afternoon a week. During this time plans were considered pass the operation of the museum to the city, but they were never finalized, and the museum closed in 1979.

Scope and Content

The City of Irving: Irving Historical Museum Collection, 1975-1981, is housed in a newspaper box, two flat boxes, a half-manuscript box, and a cubic foot box. The collection is arranged in three series.

Series I consists of documents relating to the establishment, operation, and closing of the museum. These documents provide a detailed look at the history of the museum especially its establishment and the steps the city took to determine whether to continue operation of the museum after the Bicentennial activities.

Series II is made up of late 19th Century/early 20th Century clothing. The items are primarily children's clothes but there are also a few pieces of adult men's and women's clothing. There are also a number of pieces of doll's clothing included. These were most likely donated for use in museum exhibits.

Series III consists of artifacts used in museum exhibits or in operation of the museum. These items include flags, magazines, ledger book, and rubber stamps.

There are three large flags included in the series; United States; State of Texas, and City of Irving. While there is no provenance evident, the flags most likely flew on the flag poles near the museum building. A

second, smaller U.S. flag, is also included and has an accompanying note that indicates that the flag dates to WWI. The flag was donated to the city by Anna Haley, wife of Dr. John Haley, explaining that her husband was awarded the flag during WWI for his work on a local war bond fundraising campaign.

Provenance Statement

The City of Irving: Irving Historical Museum Collection, 1975-1981, was donated to the Irving Archives in two accessions: accession numbers 78-01A, C, and D and accession number 0001-135.

Literary Rights Statement

Permission to publish from the City of Irving: Irving Historical Museum Collection must be obtained from the Irving Archives, Irving Public library.

Note to Researcher

See the Ben and Bobbie Thomas collection for additional information on the Irving Historical Museum.

Container List

Series I. Documents, 1975-1981

Box 1

Folder Title, Dates, and Description

1 Museum Operation, 1975-1981 (bulk 1975-1977)

Contains documents relating to the operation of the museum: copy of lease agreement between the city and the property owner for lease of 380 Plymouth Park Shopping Center for use as a museum, May 29, 1975; information sheet for museum volunteers containing phone numbers, hours of operation, etc.; information about Bicentennial projects and museum day-to-day operations; loan agreements between donors and the museum, 1975-1977; a newspaper article about possibly moving the museum under a city department after the Bicentennial celebration is over; ICVB promotional brochures, c. 1976; Irving Together brochure promoting a municipal bond election, 1981.

2 Museum Operation, 1975-1980

Contains documents, primarily from the office of Assistant City Manager Doug Bales, relating to the establishment of the museum and the city's role in the operation including memos about: maintenance; rental contract; signage; exhibits; the city taking over operation of the museum after the Bicentennial; costs of operating the museum as part of a city department; documents relating to moving the museum from the E. M. Kahn building at 380 Plymouth Park to 364 Plymouth Park; termination of lease agreement by property owners, August 1979.

3 Attendance Books, 1975-1979

Contains museum attendance books (Vols. 2 and 3) – July 10, 1975 – Sept. 19, 1979.

4 Signs

Contains "Hours of Operations" signs.

Series II. Textiles

Box 2

Contains children's clothes, c. early 1900s:

Short pants – green with one button on each side

Short pants – white with one button on each side

Dress – white with blue lettering on the top. Probably made from a flour or sugar sack.

Waist coat - white with collar and long sleeves

Shirt – white with long sleeves and off-center button row on front

Series II. Textiles

Box 1

Dress – white with small pleats and fringe at the bottom

Box 2

Cap – purple with decorative fringe

Adult clothes, c. early 1900s:

Skirt – white, pleated, peasant's skirt

Man's Vest – white, four button holes low on the front

Gloves – purple, one pair of fingerless gloves

Doll's clothes, c. early 1900s:

11 pieces of doll's clothing, dresses, blouses, skirts

Box 3

Contains children's clothes, c. early 1900s:

Romper – white, linen, child's romper with lace trim

Dress – white, linen, perhaps baptismal dress

Dress – white, linen, perhaps baptismal dress

Series III. Artifacts

Box 4

Contains artifacts used for display or operation of the museum:

Ledger book from Wichita Mill and Elevator Company, 1905

Magazine – Ladies Home Journal, August 1916 (no cover) remainder in good condition

Magazine – The Delineator, May 1916 (cover torn free) remainder in good condition

Newspaper – Irving Daily News, August 1, 1976, dedication of Civic Center with special insert.

Stamps – rubber stamp in the name of Sally Scriptor and a rubber stamp used to certify plats by the City Commission

Photo of and information on Rush Caldwell used as part of a display. Rush Caldwell was the brother of C. P. Caldwell Irving's mayor from 1937-1942; and a hand fan from Irving's Diamond Jubilee Celebration, 1978.

Series III. Artifacts

Box 5

Contains flags: U. S. flag in plastic case with handwritten note by Anna Haley, wife of Dr. John Haley, saying that the flag was presented to Dr. John Haley for being chairman of the local bond board that was the first in the country to buy its quota in War Bonds during WWI. The bonds were sold in less than one hour. It states that a German helmet was also given to Dr. Haley at the time. Another note from Anna Haley dated June 10, 1966, says that she gave the helmet to the school when she came back to Irving to live.