BOOK NOTES

by Archie P. McDonald

Once more we devote a few pages to notices of books of interest to members. We begin with what seems like an old friend, Best Editorial Cartoons Of The Year, 2003 Edition, edited by Charles Brooks (Pelican Publishing Company, P.O. Box 3110, Gretna, LA 70054, $14.95). I say "old friend" because we have been noting the annual publication in this series for some time. As usual, every page presents one or more cartoons from the editorial pages of newspapers throughout the United States—and in a special section—of Canada. Brooks always begins with the cartoon that won the Pulitzer and other prizes, but chapter divisions reflect the cartoonist's world in a particular year. This time, readers find division titled The Bush Administration, Democrats, Foreign Affairs, Terrorism, Congress, Enron/World Com, The Economy, Crime (especially the snipers in the Washington area), Health/Environment, Education, Sports, Church in Crisis (especially pedophilia), Media/Entertainment, Canada, and Other Issues. This is truly topical stuff and a wonderful catalog of what was important in a particular year. For example, Bill Clinton was mentioned only twice—three years ago he filled the book. Now George Bush occupies the thoughts and drawing materials of these artists.

I am not sure how many East Texas historians can use Steve Brewer's Trophy Husband: A Survival Guide to Working At Home (University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131, $21.95) as an actual "guide" to transition from the usual workplace to the home place, but most modern men can identify, a little, with his circumstance. I found that out in 1989 when Fran Vick took a chance and published my own Helpful Hints for HouseHusbands of Uppity Women, which is still in print and available from the University of North Texas Press. Now that would be a shameless promotion for my own book (which is ideal for wedding presents for unsuspecting grooms and a training manuals for the UW), were it not for the fact that this really is about Brewer's experiences. Seems he was making a passable career as a journalism while nurturing the desire to write mysteries. So he switched roles with Mrs. Brewer; she became the breadwinner and he the stay-at-home parent who writes novels while also doing laundry, yard work, and childcare. Apparently he has the routine so well honed that now he also writes humor. Of course, he doesn't mention cooking much, which is what my book is all about. But that is another story. Brewer's is worth reading, too.

Kari Frederickson's The Dixiecrat Revolt And The End Of The Solid South, 1932-1968 (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2001) is a solid study of changes in the way Southerners handled politics. As such, it pretty well confirms that the South or Southerners did not alter fundamental beliefs during these years; instead, they held on to old racist concepts as long as possible—are still holding on—and changed horses in the middle of the ride.
That is, the Democratic Party gave them segregation in the 1890s and they rode that horse until it swung in support of civil rights under Harry Truman in 1948; by 1968 they had found a new home in the Republican Party because they perceived it as opposed to civil rights. This, then, is also the story of Strom Thurman and Fielding Wright, governors of South Carolina and Mississippi, who headed the Dixiecrat ticket in 1948 for so-called state's rights over the civil rights platform of the national Democratic Party, and shattered the no longer Solid South. Thurman, in fact, became a Republican within a few years. Flash forward, now, to elections in 2002, and Mississippi Senator Trent Lott’s tribute to Thurman on the eve retirement from the Senate fifty-four years after he led Dixie out of the Democracy and into Republicanism. Lott’s tribute cost him the majority leadership, but that is hardly evidence of change in the nation or the South. More, it shows the other face of Janus. The messenger was rejected for the sake of expediency, but the message remains the same: race is still the most potent force in Southern politics, the trump even over economic recession. Frederickson’ work supports the conclusion that U.B. Phillips correctly identified the “Central Theme of Southern History” two-thirds of a century ago.

This one may seem unusual of the East Texas Historical Journal, but I include Bob Artley’s Living With Pigs (Pelican Publishing Co., P.O. Box 3110, Gretna, LA 70054, $10.95), in this section anyway. Living With Pigs is partly text and partly cartoon illustrations, all by Artley, that was intended as an art book, or perhaps a “nature” or “animal” study, but the descriptions of the hog culture are all historical. Artley’s farm experience, the fount of his inspiration for this collection, came during the 1930s. Artley’s description of farm life then, particularly as it relates to the raising of the primary domestic meat source for Southerners, gives it significance for East Texans even though his hogs were Iowans. And if that doesn’t work, just say that I like pigs.

Texas Cemeteries, The Resting Places of Famous, Infamous, and Just Plain Interesting Texans, by Bill Harvey (University of Texas Press, Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819, $22.95), tells “how-to” find, enjoy, learn from, and generally become familiar with cemeteries and their permanent residents in Texas from Abilene to Yorktown. Topics include tips on finding cemeteries, specific gravesites, and photographing gravesites. The majority of the text is devoted to those referenced in the subtitle, and entries provide biographical sketches of the famous and the infamous. This publication is number five in the Clifton and Shirley Caldwell Texas Heritage Series.

Dining at the Governor’s Mansion, by Carl R. McQueary (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4354, $24.95) combines food and history, doubtless principal interests of most members of the Association. Carl is a member of the Texas Historical Commission and an experienced curator of historical sites with a long-time interest in our first woman governor, Miriam Amanda Ferguson. As such, when Carl encountered Mrs. Ferguson’s recipes, the result is a book on “dining in the Governor’s Mansion” that is a tribute to all First Ladies and our two female governors.
Included are brief biographies of the First Ladies and governors with photos, anecdotes of every-day and special-day dining, and of course scores of recipes, some of which these presiders over the First Table of Texas might have prepared themselves.

*The White House World, Transitions, Organization, and Office Operations*, edited by Martha Joynt Kumar and Terry Sullivan (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4354, $19.95), presents technical information on planning for the transition of the presidency, the way the White House works, functions of the chief of staff, and offices of the staff, personnel, counsel, press secretary, communications, and management and administration. In other words, "The West Wing" without the drama and the Democrats, because the final quarter of the book is devoted to the presidency of Republican George W. Bush. In addition to the editors, individual essays were written by George C. Edwards III, James P. Pfiffner, John P. Burke, John H. Kessel, Charles E. Walcott, Shirley Anne Warshaw, Stephen Wayne, Karen Hult, Kathryn Dunn Tenpas, Bradley H. Patterson Jr., Maryanne Borrelli, Nancy Kassop, Peri E. Arnold, Clay Johnson III, G. Calvin Mackenzie, Norman Ornstein, and John Fortier.

*Myths Of American Slavery*, by Walter D. Kennedy with a Foreword by Bob Harrison (Pelican Publishing Co., P.O. Box 3110, Gretna, LA 70054, $24.95), is an apologia for the South’s "peculiar institution." It contains essays on the general topic of slavery as well as specific chapters on the practice in the antebellum South. This is another in the author's series of books that seek to present, and explain, the American South.

*Documents of Texas History*, Second Edition, edited by Ernest Wallace, David M. Vigness, and George B. Ward (Texas State Historical Association, University of Texas, Austin, 1 University Station D0902, Austin, TX 78712-0332, $24.95), is another old friend. I began using this source when it was a two-volume set that almost looked like it had been run off on a mimeograph machine. Alas, old friends Ernest and David are gone and George has retired and left us to fish the waters of the north, but these precious old documents keep going on. As long as Texas history is taught—or studied—they will have a life. Where else, much less so conveniently in one place, can one find a copy of Rubi's recommendations in 1768 that changed Spanish policy toward Texas; the Law of April 6, 1830, that changed Mexican policy toward Anglo Texas; or an account of *Sweatt v. Painter*, that changed the world? Being able to read the actual text of such documents is crucial to understanding why they are so important. Through the good offices of Ernest, David, and George, and the rest of the folks at TSHA, this publication makes access to them convenient for all.

channeling enough money and weapons to Afghanistan's mujahadeen to bring down the Soviet Union. Crile was so enamored by the subject and his story that he invested nine years in developing it for this book. I remember him traveling with Charlie during his last campaign for Congress and also attending a convocation on the SFA campus at which Wilson served as the principal speaker. Crile also chronicles the equally important contribution of Gust Avrakotos, the CIA agent in charge of the Afghanistan operation. Crile writes of the congressman we know and love, the old hard-drinking womanizer known as Good Time Charlie, at least until health problems and a second marriage mellowed him down. Wilson denies none of it. What Crile also has done is document just how successful, powerful, and important our congressman was. Lots of East Texans did not know that. I saw Charlie in Diboll in May 2003. He had come home to honor the Temple family at the dedication of their History Center in Diboll. Now a lobbyist, he spent most of his time on a cell phone giving directions to someone in Washington. When we visited, a roaming photographer asked to take our picture. While we posed, I saw Charlie hold up his breath and hold in his middle. Photo op over, he laughed and said, “After all the years, I still suck it up when the camera comes out.” Good book. Give it a look.

Another interesting book for the faithful is Living History, by Hillary Rodham Clinton (Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020). Perhaps “faithful” isn’t exactly the correct term to use here. What I mean is that folks who like Mrs. Clinton, and I do, will like her book; those who do not like her, and they are legion, will not. They will not because it is the word according to Mrs. Clinton on every issue connected with her husband’s political career from attorney general of Arkansas to president of the United States. I don’t know if there really was a “vast, right-wing conspiracy” or not, but Clinton’s critics throughout his presidency were numerous, vicious, and in communication with each other. That is at least “vast,” but I suppose “conspiracy” is a suspicion more than a “fact” at this point. Mrs. Clinton tells readers of growing up in Illinois, schooling at Wellsley, early professional experience as a lawyer, and, after the ball was over, of joining the US Senate. The conclusion leaves open the suggestion of a future book on Mrs. Clinton’s Senate years—perhaps after another residence in the White House.

Huey Long: His Life In Photos, Drawings, and Cartoons, by Gary Boulard (Pelican Publishing Company, P.O. Box 3110, Gretna, LA 70054, $10.95) consists of an introduction that relates the story of Louisiana’s Kingfish, then tells it again in greater detail in five chapters that are filled more with the “photos, drawings, and cartoons” than with text. That is appropriate. Anyone who wants to know the story of Huey Long should read T. Harry Williams’ award-winning biography of him, even if it was published over three decades ago. But Williams gives the reader words. Boulard gives the viewer 94 “visuals.” Some of the photos are new to me, but even more so are the political cartoons—especially the one showing Huey picking his nose.
Photographers and cartoonists can be friends or they can be enemies. One error needs to be corrected in future editions. John F. Kennedy was not the son-in-law of Boston Mayor “Honeyfitz” Fitzgerald. That would be President Kennedy’s father, Joseph P. Kennedy. But this book is about Huey Long, not the Kennedys, so forget about that and enjoy the “photos, drawings, and cartoons.”

Finally, *The Handbook Of Texas Music*, published by the Texas State Historical Association, The University of Texas At Austin, 1 University Station D0901, Austin, TX 78712-0332, $45, is a collaborative work between TSHA and the Texas Music Office, a part of the Office of the Governor. Editorial board members included Roy Barkley, Doug Barnett, Cathy Brigham, Gary Hartman, Casey Monohan, Dave Oliphant, and George B. Ward. *HTM* reflects its origins with *The New Handbook Of Texas* in its encyclopedic design but contains corrected, expanded, or completely new articles on people, places, and events associated with all types of music connected to Texas. Arrangement is alphabetical, so the book is an easy-to-use reference on topics between “Akins, Elmer,” announcer and gospel music promoter, to “Zydeco.”