

President's papers

Historians fear new law may cut writing

United Press International
WASHINGTON — When a president left office he used to cart his White House papers with him, to do with what he liked.

Chester Arthur destroyed most of his. John Tyler's were lost when Union forces burned Richmond, Va. It is believed William G. Harding's widow chucked some of his papers in the fireplace, hoping to cover up the scandals of his administration.

Franklin D. Roosevelt changed the system. He couldn't find any place in the basement or attic at home large enough to hold the mountain of papers generated in the New Deal.

Before F.D.R. took office, citizens infrequently wrote presidents. Herbert Hoover got 400 letters a day, on average; Roosevelt got 4,000.

Now presidents create records by the ton. Some 35 million pages are on file at the Texas-sized Lyndon B. Johnson Library in Austin — nearly

as much as the 40 million pages in the records of 23 early presidents in the Library of Congress.

Roosevelt set the tradition for presidents to arrange for libraries to be built at private expense with the government paying to maintain them forever after, giving tourists new places to visit across the American landscape. Historians used to mutter about the need to go from one distant place to another to do research, but lately the complaints have died out.

Previously, the Library of Congress used to scurry around after a chief executive left office, trying to get his papers. Often, it had to buy them from ancestors and what it got often wasn't complete.

Years ago, a citizen would sometimes write an ex-president for a sample of his handwriting and be given a page from an old letter. Sometimes signatures were cut off for autograph hunters. Ex-presidents didn't regard their pa-

perwork as valuable raw material for historians.

But Daniel Reed does. Reed, assistant archivist at the National Archives, is in charge of the five existing presidential libraries — holding the papers of Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Johnson — and two underdevelopment — John F. Kennedy and Gerald R. Ford.

Reed, a white-haired historian, has devoted his life to the subject. From 1959 to 1965, he supervised the indexing and microfilming of the Library of Congress' presidential collection.

Reed's chief worries these days are coping with the Richard Nixon papers and a bill wending through Congress making sure presidential papers become government property. During Watergate, Nixon, as had all presidents, claimed the papers as his personal possessions and Congress passed a bill taking custody of them from him.

As approved by the House Government Operations Committee, the new bill would make all presidential papers created after 1980 government property, to be opened 10 years after the president leaves office.

Reed fears the effect will be to cause presidents and their staffs to avoid putting some things in writing and to purge their files before they leave — to the detriment of history.

He says the Ford White House left behind a "thin" record and he's heard from "a senior staff member in a very important position" in the Carter White House that the Carters are careful about what goes into the files.

Philip Buchen, Ford's counsel and friend, testified that to keep secrets from coming out too soon "they were not writing things if they could manage to get by without writing and if they had to have it in writing for a while they gave another thought to whether it would

be kept in files," Reed said.

Reed says future presidents are likely to purge their files before leaving office or to circumvent the law by calling some papers purely personal and taking them home, even if they deal with sensitive matters of state.

"We conservatives say give the historical figure plenty of time so they don't get nervous and start destroying papers," he says. "We want the record to survive in the fullest possible form."

As for Nixon's papers, they repose in the Archives on Pennsylvania Avenue — 5,000 hours of tape recordings and 36 million pages of documents.

A small staff is putting them in order at a cost of \$111,000 this year. The Archives has asked Congress for \$1.5 million next year to hire 50 people to speed up the cataloging work. Even then, it might take six years.

New Arkansas law ends all midwifing

United Press International
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A telephone rings in a darkened house. Moments later, a woman past middle age shrugs into a coat and steps outside into a cold downpour. Ice is beginning to form on the road as she drives alone to a nearby home where all the lights are burning and the occupants are in a frenzy of undirected activity.

Once inside, the woman takes charge. The events of the next few hours are now her responsibility, and if all goes well, a new human being will have entered the world by the time the sun rises.

The woman is a midwife.

So many women were delivering babies in the rural areas of Arkansas that in the 1940s the state decided to train them formally and issue them permits to practice.

But only a few midwives remain in the state and as of Jan. 1 they will no longer be allowed to work.

"Obstetrics has gone through such a revolution in the past 10 years, the service just had to end," said Dr. Byron Hawks, who is implementing the state Health Board's decision to end the program. "Their time came. They've created a void we're trying our best to fill."

Hawks is associate director of the maternal and child health programs

for the Health Department, which will be replacing midwifery with trained nurse-midwives and regional programs.

"The permitted midwife would have died of attrition anyway in a year or two," he said. He pointed out that the remaining midwives are mostly in their 60s to 80s and young kids aren't coming along and taking their places.

The Health Department required that the midwives attend classes where they were taught "minimum obstetrics," Hawks said. Their cardinal rule was to call a doctor if anything went wrong during delivery.

But each of the midwives has added to her training a personal brand of skill to make the birth easier for the baby.

"I talk to her," said Reola Beasley, 64, a midwife in McGehee, "let her know she's progressing nicely, give her courage she can do it."

Mrs. Scott has been a midwife since 1935 and estimates she has delivered 400 to 500 babies. Some women with longer careers say they have brought several thousand children into the world.

"It was given to me in the spirit, that's the way I became a midwife," Mrs. Scott said. But she also attended Health Department classes. State officials working with the

midwives say most of the women are very religious and often superstitious.

"They use a form of hypnotism in labor, singsong business," Hawks said. "We had to put one or two out of business. They'd get carried away with some religious streak. We'd have afterbirth worship and all kinds of things."

A state nurse specialist in Monticello, Ark., who works with the midwives in southeast Arkansas, talked about the women using visions, hexes, spirits and veils in their work. "It's very difficult to get superstitions away," Mary Alice Smith said.

But for the most part, health officials have been grateful to the women for taking up the slack in inaccessible backwoods regions, Hawks said. "They earn their money, believe me they do."

The midwives charge about \$75 per birth. That includes three or four visits before the birth and several afterwards.

"I go to visit her before she has the baby so we be acquainted, don't be strangers to one another," Mrs. Scott said.

"I go back the next day or sometimes the same day (as the birth) if I'm not satisfied," Mrs. Beasley said. "I'm a worry wart. I worry about 'em a lot."

Like all midwives, Mrs. Beasley and Mrs. Scott can tell tales of going to deliver babies in the worst kinds of weather. "They don't care when they come," Mrs. Beasley said.

"I was at a girl's house one night and she was having a baby, and lightning struck something and put the lights out in the house," Mrs. Beasley recalled. "But they came back on before she had it."

Neither of the women is distraught by the ruling they must end their practice this year, and Hawks said that's the general attitude among the state's midwives.

"They took it all very well. They're a little frightened down there now. Their former clients are seeking more refined care," he said.

So the Health Department threw a retirement party for them in Monticello this summer, with long-stemmed roses and speeches and "wonderful singing," Hawks said. He and the assorted midwives remember it as a happy occasion.

"One of them had to have two people hold her up when she stood up. She said she was waiting for the Lord to tell her when to quit, and I represented the Lord, so it was OK," Hawks said.

"We at the Health Department are mournful about it. I hate to be the hatchet man," he said. "It's just an anachronism. It really had to come to an end."

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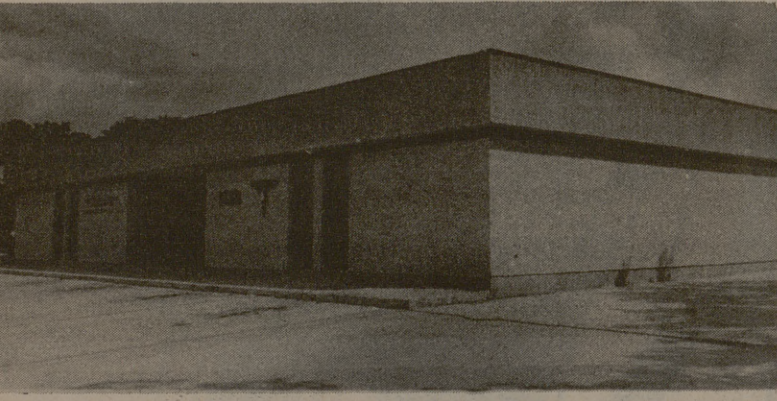
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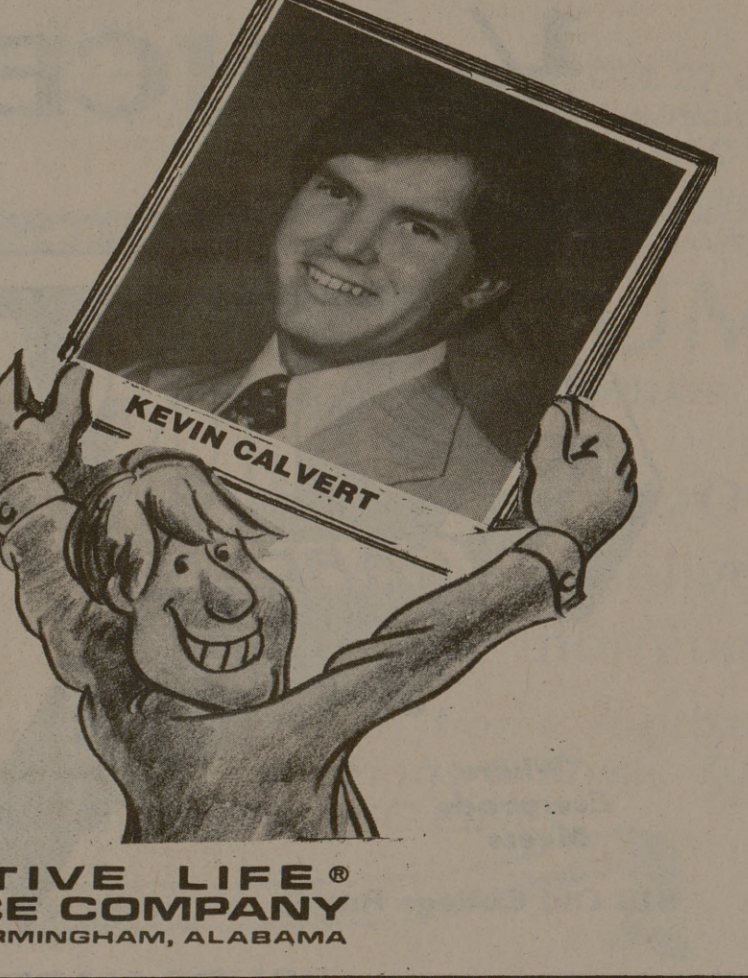
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what's up?

- Thursday
- POLITICAL FORUM:** Gen. William Westmoreland will speak on "Trouble Spots Around the Globe" at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. Westmoreland was commander of the U.S. army forces in Vietnam and later chief of staff, the highest position in the Army. He will speak about the military and political situation in the world today. Admission is 25 cents for students and 50 cents for non-students.
 - OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION:** All off-campus girls are invited to dine with the Corps of Cadets in Duncan Dining Hall Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 6:30 p.m. Those who are interested should sign up today in Room 216, OSA cubicle.
 - RHA:** Will have a meeting in Room 113, Biological Sciences Building East at 8 p.m.
 - TAMU MICRO COMPUTER CLUB:** Bob Weir will speak on "How To Write and Be Published," and there will be a demonstration of the complete club system at 7 p.m. in Room 203, Zachry.
 - WATER SKI CLUB:** Will meet at 7 p.m. in Room 510, Rudder Tower.
 - BAHA'I CLUB:** Welcomes everyone to a public meeting on "How To Write and Be Published," at 7:30 p.m. in the All Faith Chapel.
 - CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST:** Will meet at 7 p.m. in Room 302, Rudder Tower.
 - HANG GLIDERS:** The Robbins Aero Squadron Hang Gliders Club will meet at 8 p.m. in Room 704AB, Rudder Tower.
 - CROSS COUNTRY:** The men's team will run in Austin at 4 p.m.
 - MSC RADIO COMMITTEE:** Will discuss Bonfire communications and have a presentation on message handling at 7:30 p.m. in Room 401, Rudder Tower.
 - CEPHEID VARIABLE:** Presents "Omega Man," a terrifying look into a future where the world's population has been decimated by bacteriological warfare. Charlton Heston is pursued by a group of black-robed fanatics bent on destroying all traces of the technology that ruined the world. This movie will be shown at 8 and 10:30 p.m. in Room 601, Rudder Tower.
 - MSC OUTDOOR RECREATION:** Will have a seminar on fishing at 7:30 p.m. in Room 104B, Zachry. New members are welcome. For more information, call 693-6286.
- Friday
- DEADLINE:** Student organizations may still renew their recognition in the Student Finance Center. All organizations must renew their recognition each year. Organizations may renew past the Sept. 15 deadline. The Student Finance Center is located in Room 217, MSC, and is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - VOLLEYBALL:** The women's team will play in the Southwest Missouri Tournament in Springfield, Mo., today and Saturday.
 - PINK PANTHER FESTIVAL:** Aggie Cinema will show "The Pink Panther," the first pink panther film in which Inspector Clouseau of the Paris Police encounters the Pink Panther. This movie, starring Peter Sellers, David Niven and Robert Wagner will be shown at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. "A Shot In the Dark," starring Peter Sellers and Elke Sommer, in which Inspector Clouseau attempts to capture an accused murderer, will be shown at 10 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.
- Saturday
- FOOTBALL:** The Texas Aggies will play Baylor University in Kyle Field at 1:30 p.m.
 - PINK PANTHER FESTIVAL:** "The Return of the Pink Panther," starring Peter Sellers and Christopher Plummer, in which Inspector Clouseau once again stumbles from one zany incident to another, will be shown at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. "The Pink Panther Strikes Again" will be shown at 10 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.
 - A&M WHEELMEN:** Will have a 40-mile "Tour de Snook" ride. Those who are interested should meet at 8 a.m. at Rudder Fountain.
- Sunday
- PINK PANTHER FESTIVAL:** "Pink Panther & Friends All-Star Comedy Show," a collection of comedy shorts starring the Pink Panther, Inspector Clouseau, Roadrunner, Bugs Bunny, the Marx Brothers and the Three Stooges, will be shown at 2 p.m. in Rudder Theater.
 - MAID OF COTTON:** Applications for Maid of Cotton may be picked up in the Student Activities Office, Room 221, MSC, between 1 a.m. and 5 p.m. To be eligible, a candidate must never have been married, be between the ages of 19 and 23 inclusive, be from a cotton-producing state or moved to one prior to age 7, and be at least 5 foot, 5 inches tall. Applications must be postmarked no later than midnight Nov. 12 and be accompanied by three 8 1/2 x 11 glossy photographs.
 - A&M CYCLING TEAM:** Student body bike races for all students and faculty will be held, with separate classes for different abilities and trophies awarded will be held at 3 p.m. at the Drill Field.
 - ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY SOCIETY:** Will have a picnic at Hensel Park at 2 p.m.

NOTICE

It has been RUMORED THAT

- ★ Chasing girls
- ★ Watching T.V.
- ★ Getting caught by Aggies
- ★ Partying
- ★ Studying (???)
- ★ BEATING THE HELL OUT OF BAYLOR

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