

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Joyce Kennerly**

Ms. Kennerly is the Public Information Officer for the Fort Bend County Public Library System. Joyce provides an interest story about 12 Rosenberg women in 1945 who started a book club that morphed into the Fort Bend County Library System. These strong-minded ladies decided to advocate for a county library and a bookmobile. They visited libraries in neighboring counties to gather information to present their findings to the county judge and county commissioners.

On May 12, 1947, commissioners' court voted to create a library and named its first board members. Mamie George donated the land next to Polly Ryon Hospital for the library building. In 1948, the library opened and a bookmobile was purchased to provide books to folks who could not visit the library. In 1994, a Founders Reception was held to honor those pioneering women. Today, the ever-evolving Library System has grown to 12 facilities with more planned as the county continues to grow.

19 Pages

∥ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview.* ∥

Interview Summary

People (in alphabetical order)

Andrew Briscoe – County Commissioner

Mayde Waddell Butler – founder

Mary Lou Cooper – first Librarian

Emma Lee Schawe Dickerson – founder

Doris Erwin – founder

Fern Garmany – founder

J C Gassaway – County Commissioner

Mamie George – philanthropist

Inez Hockmuth – founder

Maude Wallace Knipling – founder

Kathleen Joerger Lindsey – founder

Angela Joerger McNutt – founder

Lillian Hruzek Meyer – founder

Charles Schultz – County Judge

Ruth Beckmann Schultz – founder

Tom Snedecor – County Commissioner

Marjorie Balke Vogelsang – founder

I G Wirtz, Jr. – County Commissioner

Viola Yates – founder

Places / Businesses

Brazoria County

Fort Bend Conty

Wharton County

Events

In 1945 twelve Rosenberg women began a book club.

In 1947, the first Share-A-Book began in Rosenberg.

In 1948, with donation of land by Mamie George, the county built its first library with over 8,000 volumes of books.

Today, there are 12 library facilities throughout the county with a budget of over \$10 million. More libraries are planned based on population growth.