

# CONNECTIONS

LYNDON B. JOHNSON IN SAN MARCOS

APRIL 2009

CONNECTIONS: LYNDON B. JOHNSON IN SAN MARCOS

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY-SAN MARCOS | APRIL 2009

**100**  
LYNDON B. JOHNSON  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
CELEBRATING HIS CAN-DO SPIRIT

TEXAS  STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
SAN MARCOS

*The rising STAR of Texas*

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# Connections: Lyndon B. Johnson in San Marcos | April 2009

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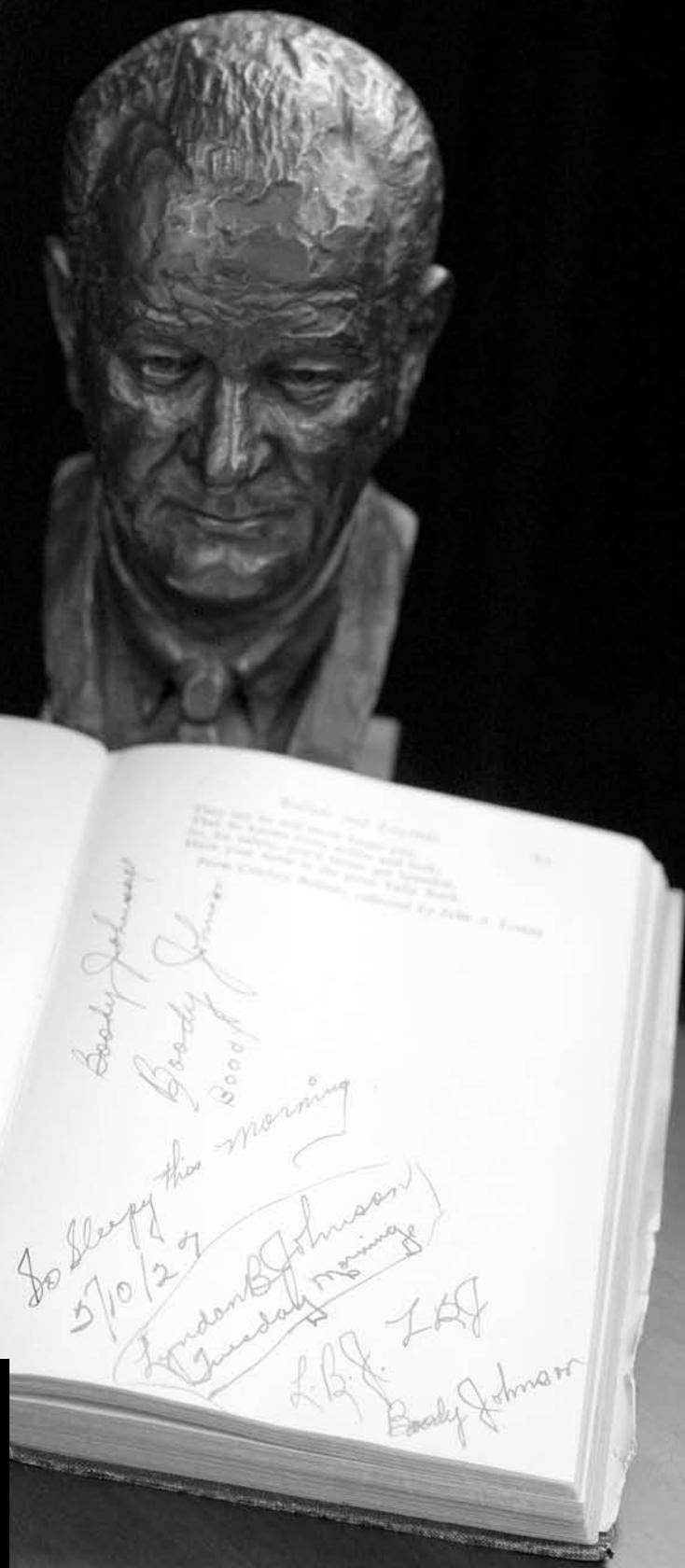
### On the cover

Johnson retired to his Central Texas ranch after leaving the White House in January 1969. He made a nostalgic visit to his alma mater on April 27, 1970, and stopped in to speak to a government class.

# In special company

**W**e like to brag about the fact that Texas State University is the only college in Texas to have graduated a U.S. president. In fact, Texas State is one of only 24 colleges in the country that can claim a president as a graduate, and is one of only a handful of *public* universities to have graduated a U.S. president. If we don't count the military academies, only three other public universities have awarded undergraduate degrees to future presidents – the University of North Carolina (James K. Polk), Miami of Ohio (Benjamin Harrison) and Michigan (Gerald Ford). If we do count the military academies, we add West Point (Ulysses S. Grant and Dwight D. Eisenhower) and Annapolis (Jimmy Carter), and if we count degrees of any kind, we add the University of Virginia Law School (Woodrow Wilson). William and Mary, now a public university, graduated three early presidents, but it was not state supported until 1906. If we take the list of public universities to have graduated presidents and remove those that are considered “public ivies,” Texas State stands alone.

Regardless of how you figure it, Texas State University is in special company.



One of Johnson's textbooks, in which he practiced his signature. "Boody Johnson" is Alfred Johnson, a friend (not related) with whom Lyndon shared textbooks and a room above Cecil Evans' garage. The textbook, on loan to the university for a year from Lynda Johnson Robb, is on display at the LBJ Museum of San Marcos.



Sometimes, in places far from Texas, the only thing people know about our university is that it is the alma mater of Lyndon Johnson. If they have to know only one thing about us, that's not a bad place to start.

Lyndon Johnson was born near here, in Stonewall, on August 27, 1908. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of his birth, Texas State joined the LBJ Library and Museum in Austin, the LBJ Foundation, the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, the LBJ national and state parks, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and the LBJ Museum of San Marcos for a year of activities highlighting his legacy. We chose the theme of “Civic Responsibility and the Legacy of LBJ” as our Common Experience theme for the academic year of 2008-09, and we focused our invited speakers, performing arts, exhibitions, debates, service projects, and much of our classroom discussion on that theme (see calendar, page 84).

Johnson enrolled here as a student in 1927 and graduated in 1930. Here he formed his core belief in the power of education that he took with him to the White House to shape nation-changing legislation. Those years molded his passion not only for education but also for social justice, economic opportunity and civic responsibility. Johnson's childhood and college years gave him an empathy for the poor and an unwavering faith in the American Dream that led to his ideas for the Great Society. And he returned here as congressman, senator, vice president, president and former president, each time sharing a bit of that passion with us.

In this collection of stories and photographs, we have attempted to reflect some of those student days — what others remember about him, his thoughts captured in his *College Star* editorials, his activities as a student — as well as later connections with the university and the San Marcos community. The present-day campus reflects our pride in his legacy — his name is on streets, buildings, lectures, awards and a statue on the Quad — and we trust that this publication reflects that pride, too.

*Denise M. Truitt*

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