



Summary Information

Title: Mary Anna Crary Anderson Big Thicket Collection

Collection Number: 1999:022

Creator: Mary Anna Crary Anderson

Collection Dates: 1974-1993, bulk 1974-1987

Extent: .20 cubic feet (1 box)

Language: English

Collection Abstract:

The Mary Anna Crary Anderson Big Thicket Collection consists of clippings, the Big Thicket Association's *Petals, Pine, and Print* newsletter, correspondence, *Big Thicket Bulletin* newspapers, pamphlets, and other newspapers documenting the activities of the Big Thicket Association primarily from 1974-1987. The collection focuses on Big Thicket expansion, conservation, environmental issues, Big Thicket history, and the early 1980s controversy over the firing of Big Thicket National Preserve museum staff.

Repository:

The History Center
102 N. Temple
Diboll, TX 75941
936-829-3543
www.thehistorycenteronline.com

Author/Processing Information: Original inventory created in 1999. Formal processing by Matt Gorzalski in October 2011.

Biographical/Historical Note:

The Big Thicket of Southeast Texas is a thickly forested area covering much of Hardin, Liberty, Tyler, San Jacinto, and Polk Counties and is roughly bounded by the San Jacinto River, Neches River, and Pine Island Bayou. The Atakapas, Caddos, and Alabama-Coushattas were some of the earliest American Indian tribes to explore the thicket for its resources. Lorenzo de Zavalla laid first claim to the land in his 1829 land grant that included much of the Big Thicket area, which was subsequently settled by Anglo-Americans in the 1830s. The Big Thicket suffered much devastation as the Texas lumber industry boomed in the late 19th century, followed by the oil industry in the early 20th century.

Early efforts to save the Big Thicket began in 1927 with the East Texas Big Thicket Association founded by R. E. Jackson. While the association and movement to designate 400,000 acres as a national park gained considerable momentum in the 1930s, the increased demand for lumber during World War II effectively ended the conservation effort. The Big Thicket Association was established in 1964 by Liberty mayor Dempsey Henley and naturalist Lance Rosier to save the remnants of the thicket area. The association's efforts cumulated with the establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve with Public Law 93-439 on October 11, 1974. The preserve is noted for being one of the most biologically diverse areas in the world. It expands over Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Orange, Polk, and Tyler counties.

Collection Scope and Content:

The Mary Anna Crary Anderson Big Thicket Collection consists of clippings, the Big Thicket Association *Petals, Pine, and Print* newsletter, correspondence, and *Big Thicket Bulletin* newspapers. The collection documents the activities of the Big Thicket Association (BTA) from primarily 1974-1987. The clippings focus on Big Thicket expansion efforts, conservationist activities, and the Big Thicket museum controversy involving the BTA and Nick and Leni Rodes in the early 1980s. Most of the clippings are from the *Beaumont Enterprise* and *Houston Chronicle*. Some correspondence documents also pertain to the controversy. The *Petals, Pine, and Print* documents the activities of the BTA as does the *Big Thicket Bulletin*, which also describes museum activities, special events, government funding, history, wildlife, and conservation issues. Within the *Big Thicket Bulletin* folder is a *Kountze News-Visitor* dated Aug 24, 1981, a *Texas Observer* dated Sept 11, 1981, *Big Thicket Crossroads* dated Spring 1991, and a *Beaumont Enterprise-Journal* dated March 30, 1975.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged and described at the collection level.

Subject Terms

Topics

- Conservationists -- Texas, East
- Natural areas -- Texas, East
- National parks and reserves -- Texas, East
- Nature conservation -- Texas, East
- Wildlife conservation -- Texas, East
- Wildlife conservationists -- Texas, East

Corporate Names

- Big Thicket Association
- Big Thicket Museum (Tex.)

Locations

- Big Thicket (Tex.)
- Big Thicket National Preserve (Tex.)
- Texas, East

Access and Use

Access Restrictions: There are no restrictions on this collection.

Acquisition Information: Donated by Mary Anna Crary Anderson on March 31, 1999.

Citation: Mary Anna Crary Anderson Big Thicket Collection, 1974-1993, 1999:022, The History Center, Diboll, TX

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Bibliography:

- Big Thicket Association, <http://www.btatx.org/> (accessed October 17, 2011).
- Francis E. Abernethy, "BIG THICKET," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/gkb03>), accessed October 17, 2011. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Collection Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1	Clippings, 1981-1993
Folder 2	<i>Petals, Pines, and Print</i> , 1985-1987
Folder 3	Bibliography of Big Thicket Sources
Folder 4	Correspondence, 1976-1981
Folder 5	Environmental Pamphlets, 1979, undated
Folder 6	Establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve (Public Law 93-439), 1974
Folder 7	<i>Big Thicket Bulletin</i> , 1974-1982