



## Mission Statement

The Portal to Texas History offers students and lifelong learners a digital gateway to the rich collections held in Texas libraries, museums, archives, historical societies, and private collections. The Portal team at the University of North Texas provides strong leadership by supporting collaborative efforts with its partners, while pursuing the goals of accessibility, best practices, and preservation of historic material.

## Organization History

With a proven track record in collaboration, the University of North Texas (UNT) Libraries remain a passionate advocate for the power of digital libraries in providing vital information and knowledge to constituents. In 2002, the UNT Libraries began planning the Portal to Texas History to address the recognized needs of several user groups: students, teachers, researchers and lifelong learners seeking improved access to primary source materials held in libraries, museums, historical societies and archives; and institutions needing assistance with digitizing and making copies of their holdings available on the internet. Creation of the technical infrastructure for the project proceeded with funding from a competitive Texas Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund grant. In addition to substantial budgetary support from the UNT Libraries, the Portal has received over \$700,000 in federal and private support since its inception.

**Partners and Content.** Through the technology tools developed by the Digital Projects Unit for the Portal to Texas History, smaller libraries and museums without the digital expertise to create their own online presence have been empowered to add materials from their collections. The Portal hosts content from twenty-five partners, and plans to continually add materials from new collaborators. The Portal to Texas History program currently provides access to over 25,000 pages of historical documents, such as photographs, maps, books, diaries, letters, and records. People using the resource can perform a full-text search of the materials, or browse them by subject, contributor, collection, or historical era. Helping educators teach Texas history is a goal, and Primary Source Adventures map materials from the Portal collections to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) requirements for students studying Texas History in the 4th and 7th grades. Using the study guides, Texas History teachers can direct their students to primary source historical documents that will dramatically enrich their learning experience.

**The Digital Projects Unit.** The Digital Projects Unit is located on the third floor of the Willis Library, in room 370. With over \$400,000 in equipment, the Digital Projects Unit at UNT incorporates state-of-the-art digital technology to accomplish its goals, and has the capacity to handle all types of materials, from over-sized maps to rare and fragile books. The broad range of equipment contained in the lab enable the successful completion of large-scale digitization projects.

**Officers and Board Members.** The Portal to Texas History does not have a board, but plans on forming working groups comprised of participants. Cathy Nelson Hartman, principal investigator and Assistant Dean of the Libraries, has extensive, successful experience with managing grant-funded projects. The digital projects unit employs five full-time employees, four part-time employees, as well as several part-time grant funded positions.