

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

How Chloroforming Rice Launched a University and a Moonshot



A will-forging attorney and a gullible valet conspired in chloroforming to death their employer, a philanthropist named William Marsh Rice (1816–1900). Besides a memorial statue (*left*), Rice's legacy included donating more than \$120 million, in today's dollars, toward founding in Houston, Texas, his namesake Rice Institute (*right*; the Administration Building). That educational institution evolved into Rice University, where U.S. President John F. Kennedy announced in 1962 that, "We choose to go to the moon." Seated behind him during that speech was a proud Texan, U.S. Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. Both men knew that well before this speech, in order to relocate Mission Control (for future manned space flight) from Florida to Texas, Rice University had sold acreage near Houston for a tiny (not tidy) sum to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. In 1963 the Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Florida, was named posthumously after President Kennedy; in 1973 the one at Houston, Texas, posthumously after President Johnson. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator, ASA's Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.