

THE

# MEDALLION

SPRING 2018

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



## ON THIS SITE

FIRST KNOWN AS PERRY'S POINT, A FORT, ESTABLISHED IN 1830 BY GENERAL MANUEL MIER Y TERÁN FOR THE PURPOSE OF HALTING ANGLO-AMERICAN COLONIZATION WAS NAMED ANAHUAC, THE AZTEC NAME OF MEXICO CITY. THEN THE CAPITAL OF TEXAS • THE IMPRISONMENT HERE OF SETTLERS IN AUSTIN'S COLONY BROUGHT THE FIRST OPEN REBELLION TO MEXICAN RULE IN 1832

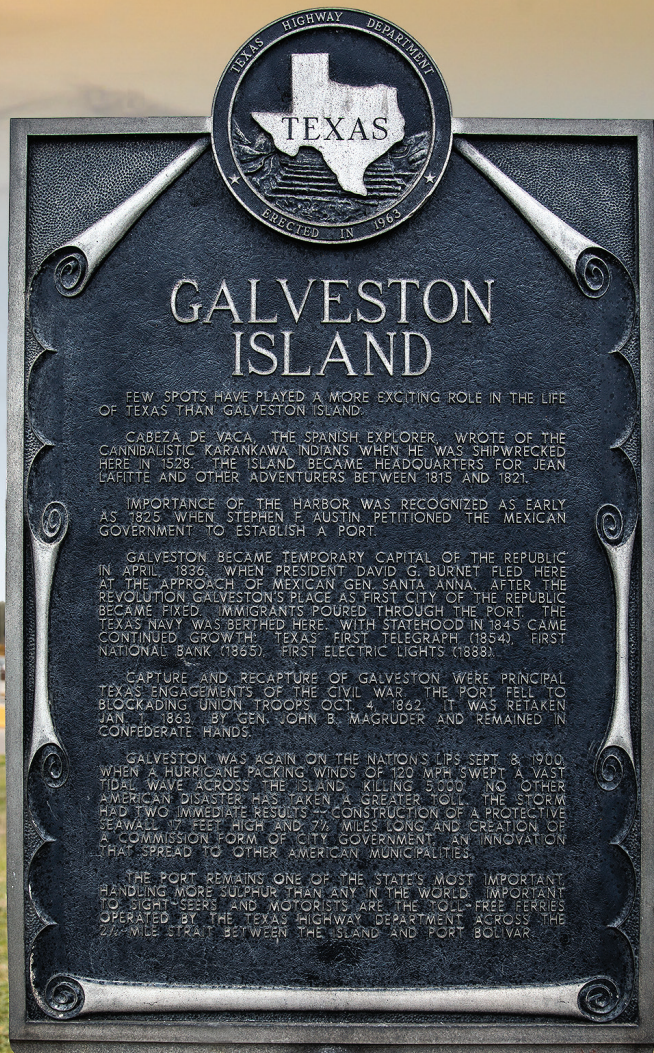
Erected by the State of Texas  
1936

## 'THE SPIRIT OF REVOLT'

EXPLORE LESSER-KNOWN TEXAS REVOLUTION SITES IN THE INDEPENDENCE TRAIL REGION

PLUS Battle of Medina | The U.S.-Mexico War | New National Register Military Sites





ON THE COVER: A THC Centennial Marker notes the location of Fort Anahuac. Photo by Patrick Hughey.

**PAGE 6** This oversized 1963 tourist marker commemorates Galveston's history and its role in the Texas Revolution.

## Make Plans Now for Historic Sites Free Day May 6!

In celebration of National Preservation Month and Texas Travel and Tourism Week, the THC will offer free admission to 20 state historic sites on May 6. Several of the military forts and beautiful historic homes have recently been renovated or restored. For a list of sites participating this year, please visit [texashistoricsites.com](http://texashistoricsites.com).

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
*real places telling real stories*

ISSN 0890-7595 Vol. 56, No. II  
[thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov) [thc@thc.texas.gov](mailto:thc@thc.texas.gov)

### TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

John L. Nau, III Chairman  
John W. Crain Vice Chairman  
Gilbert E. "Pete" Peterson Secretary

Earl Broussard, Jr. Catherine McKnight  
Monica Burdette Tom Perini  
Wallace B. Jefferson Daisy Sloan White

Mark Wolfe Executive Director

### Medallion STAFF

Chris Florance Division Director  
Andy Rhodes Managing Editor  
Judy Jensen Sr. Graphic Design Coordinator

[thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov) Real places telling  
the real stories of Texas

[texastimetravel.com](http://texastimetravel.com) The Texas Heritage Trails  
Program's travel resource

[texashistoricsites.com](http://texashistoricsites.com) The THC's 22 state  
historic properties

[thcfriends.org](http://thcfriends.org) Friends of the Texas  
Historical Commission

### Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.

*The Medallion* is published quarterly by the Texas Historical Commission. Address correspondence to: Managing Editor, *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276. Portions of the newsletter that are not copyrighted or reprinted from other sources may be reprinted with permission. Contributions for the support of this publication are gratefully accepted. For information about alternate formats of this publication, contact the THC at 512-463-6255.

*The Medallion* is financed in part by a grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. All of the agency's public programs and activities are operated free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should write to Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

*The Medallion* is available online at [thc.texas.gov/medallion](http://thc.texas.gov/medallion). If you would prefer to receive *The Medallion* electronically instead of through the mail, please send your name and address to [thc@thc.texas.gov](mailto:thc@thc.texas.gov). You will be notified by email when each new issue is available on the THC website and will no longer receive a printed copy.







## TEXAS SENATOR LOIS KOLKHURST LEADERSHIP LETTER

Dear Friends,

Texans share a deep affection for our unique history. As a State Senator and a descendant of colonial settlers, I am proud to represent a district that played a major part in the Texas War for Independence and the Republic of Texas.

The next chapter of our rich history will be told at the Museum and Visitors Center at the San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site.

The center will be a premier destination for anyone interested in Texas history. Opening in spring of 2018, it will allow visitors to follow the footsteps of Stephen F. Austin as he arrived in Texas in 1821 to establish a township known as San Felipe. The site will tell the tale of pioneers emigrating from across the U.S., forming the famed Old 300, and receiving land grants to help fulfill Austin's vision.

The story of San Felipe abruptly ended in 1836, when citizens famously burned the town to slow Santa Anna's pursuit of Sam Houston. The citizens of San Felipe fled the flames and joined others from Gonzales and elsewhere in what became known as the Runaway Scrape. Although San Felipe was destroyed, a bigger victory would soon follow. A few days later, Texian troops attacked the weary Mexican army at San Jacinto and decisively won our independence.

Find out more about San Felipe by following the Independence Trail, one of 10 regions of the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Heritage Trails Program.

Beyond San Felipe, the sites of my senate district tell the story of Texas. Travel the roads of Senate District 18 to see the site of the Goliad Massacre, the "Come and Take It" tale of Gonzales, the signing of the declaration of independence from Mexico at Washington-on-the-Brazos, the story of those who drew "the black bean" at Monument Hill in La Grange, or any of the other heroic stories at places like Victoria, Cuero, Refugio, Palacios, and Wharton. Texas history happens here, so come and take it!

Regards,

Senator Lois Kolikhurst  
Texas House District 18





# TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY ON THE EARLY TEXAS FRONTIER

## Atascosa County Ensures 1813 Battle of Medina Remains Historically Significant

Text by Barbara Westbrook, Atascosa County Historical Commission (CHC) Chair. Photos by Bruce C. Eichman, Atascosa County CHC Vice Chair.

Almost forgotten by generations of Texans, the 1813 Battle of Medina was the fierce and bloody climax of the first Texas war for independence. The battle—which took place in modern-day Atascosa County—pitted Tejanos with their American Indian and Anglo-American allies against an overwhelming Royalist Spanish army. Some historians have noted it was not only one of the largest land battles fought west of the Mississippi River, but that the size of the Spanish army exceeded that of the Mexican army that attacked the Alamo in 1836.

From a different perspective, some historians have indicated the battle was the inevitable continuation and extension of rebellions against foreign Spanish rule across Mexico

and Latin America. Other historians have hinted at the subtle influence from the neighboring United States and its sweeping policy of Manifest Destiny.

“Equally important but poorly recognized in Texas history was the wave of tragic consequences that followed the Spanish victory,” says Al McGraw, a regional historian. “Those effects altered the subsequent history north of the Rio Grande. The same effects also created a pivotal moment in time that changed the direction of San Antonio’s tricentennial history.”



Top: Participants in Atascosa County’s annual battle ceremony include David Martin, George Chavez, Modesto Silva, John Luna, Juan A. Gonzales, Jeff Opperman, Bart Tyler, Luis Sepulveda, Sr., Michael Sully, Mike Reynolds, and Eric Morrell.

Above: THC Military Sites Program Coordinator Lila Rakoczy at last year’s Battle of Medina symposium.

Right: John Luna participated in last year’s battle event.





In 1813, Spain's newly appointed Commandant General Joaquín de Arredondo arrived in Laredo with plans to crush Mexico's revolution against Spanish rule. He ordered Colonel Ignacio Elizondo to go to San Antonio de Béxar with 1,000 men to observe the enemy.

"Elizondo's force was seen, causing panic among the inhabitants," McGraw explains. "As a result, the Republicans marched to meet the enemy on the banks of the Alazán. The battle was a decisive victory for the Republicans, and the Royalists retreated across the Rio Grande to report the defeat to General Arredondo."

Arredondo, with Elizondo and an army of nearly 2,000—including young Lieutenant Antonio López de Santa Anna—marched from Laredo to San Antonio. A spy company discovered Arredondo's army on the Frio River, approximately 50 miles south of San Antonio. To spare the homes and families in San Antonio, the Republicans marched south to meet the enemy.

The four-hour Battle of Medina, also referred to as La Batalla del Encinal de Medina, ended the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition along with the first Republic of Texas, declared in San Fernando de Béxar four months earlier. The battle resulted in the death of some 1,400 Republicans, many of their bodies left on the battlefield until 1822. That year, the first governor of the State of Texas under the newly established Republic of Mexico, Félix Trespalcacios, ordered



a group to gather the bones for an honorable burial. An oak tree once marked the site of the mass grave.

"The battle's aftermath included an inquisition-style martial law that temporarily collapsed the fragile stability of the region's political, economic, and social infrastructures," McGraw explains.

Although thousands of men were engaged and over 900 Spanish cannon shots were fired, the lack of extensive archeological evidence has precluded the identification of the exact battle site. To date, the location is still "lost" along the dim trail of the Old Laredo Road between the banks of the Medina River and the historical Atascosa sands.

Atascosa County residents and local historians have long recognized the battle as an important part of their history. In 1985, the publication *Forgotten Battlefield of the First Texas Revolution: The Battle of the Medina, August 18, 1813* by Ted Schwartz and Robert H. Thonhoff, served as a catalyst in recognizing its inter-regional and statewide significance.



Above: At left, Tom Green, of the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution, listens to Atascosa County Judge Robert Hurley at the battle ceremony.

Left: Atascosa CHC appointees Mike Reynolds and Eric Morrell participated in the event.

## ATASCOSA'S ANNUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The first formal Atascosa County event to commemorate the battle was held in 1988. Since 2000, an annual event has been held, and in 2005 an Official Texas Historical Marker was placed to honor the battle's history. In 2017, Atascosa County co-sponsored the event with the neighboring Medina County Historical Commission. Atascosa County Judge Robert Hurley

has traditionally opened each event with welcoming remarks.

In addition to the morning's commemorative activities, led by Tom Green of the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution, the annual event includes an afternoon symposium of speakers. The Texas Historical Commission's Military Sites Program

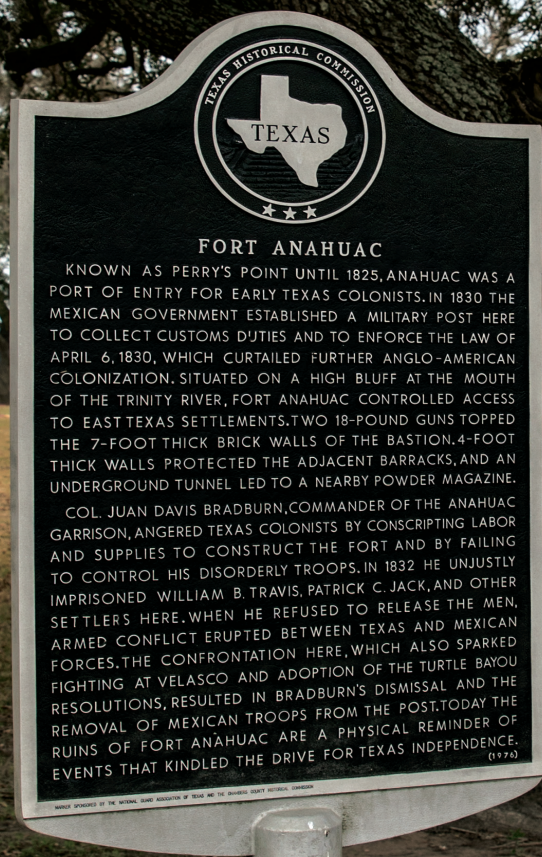
coordinator typically participates in the annual event.

The symposia have evolved to include a wide range of topics presented by university historians, archeologists, archivists, and other researchers from Texas and Louisiana. The next event will be in the community of Leming on August 18, 2018.

**For more information, contact Barbara Westbrook of the Atascosa CHC at [barbara.westbrook@atascosacounty.texas.gov](mailto:barbara.westbrook@atascosacounty.texas.gov).**



# 'THE SPIRIT OF REVOLT'



FORT ANAHUAC PARK



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
TEXAS HERITAGE TRAILS PROGRAM



# Explore Lesser-Known Texas Revolution Sites in the Independence Trail Region

*Four years before the famous battles at the Alamo and San Jacinto, a little-known skirmish occurred at the mouth of the Trinity River east of Houston. The location has been called the “birthplace of the Texas Revolution” because the events that occurred here in 1832 kindled the drive for independence.*

A fort—constructed by Mexican convicts in 1830 and named Anahuac to honor the ancient home of the Aztecs—was intended to protect Mexico as it enforced a new law decreasing further Anglo-American colonization. In 1832, William B. Travis and his law partner Patrick C. Jack antagonized Mexican Col. Juan Bradburn by organizing a civil militia and attempting to recover escaped slaves. These conflicts resulted in Travis’ and Jack’s imprisonment at Fort Anahuac, leading to armed confrontation on June 10. The escalated tensions simmered for years before coming to a head at the legendary battles for independence in 1835–36.

“Anahuac brought together strong personalities with differing ideas on their liberties and their loyalties,” reports THC Historical Markers Program Coordinator Bob Brinkman. “As Texas Revolution eyewitness Creed Taylor later recalled, ‘The spirit of revolt began to flare up everywhere and was soon at white heat.’”

Fort Anahuac and other sites that played a significant yet underappreciated role in the Texas Revolution are peppered throughout the Texas Historical Commission’s Texas Independence Trail Region. Many of these locations are ideal day trips for area residents in search of an escape from the city for an afternoon of learning and exploring.

At **Fort Anahuac Park** (co.chambers.tx.us, 409-267-2409), visitors can spend

an hour or two strolling the peaceful grounds reading several THC historical markers, including the official William B. Travis marker. Dozens of concrete strips outline the approximate location of the multi-sided Fort Anahuac, anchored in the center by a 1936 Centennial Marker.



Overlooking a dramatic bluff at the mouth of the Trinity River, the park also features an extensive pier with elevated viewing stands that draw birders and several acres of natural areas for campers, anglers, and hikers. Sharp-eyed visitors may also catch a glimpse of Fort Anahuac itself: portions of the original brick that comprised the seven-foot-thick walls are scattered just below the bluff’s surface (please leave them in place).

About 45 miles southeast of Houston is Galveston, a destination known for

its historic buildings and panoramic beaches. But did you know Galveston played a role in Texas’ independence?

On March 17, 1836, the hastily organized and interim cabinet of President David G. Burnet evacuated Washington-on-the-Brazos at the approach of Mexican Gen. Santa Anna’s army, eventually moving the Texans’ seat of government to Galveston. It remained there until after the Texas victory at San Jacinto on April 21.

“It’s true that Galveston briefly served as the capital of the republic,” says Dwayne Jones, executive director of the **Galveston Historical Foundation** (galvestonhistory.org, 409-765-7834). “That’s pretty important because this was the largest city at the time. Immigration was picking up, and people from across Europe were arriving and taking their first steps on the soil of Galveston Island. It’s exciting to think about—they were leaving their home countries and starting new lives right here.”

The harbor’s significance was recognized as early as 1825, when Stephen F. Austin petitioned the Mexican government to establish a port. From January 1836 until U.S. annexation in 1846, Galveston was the naval base for the fleet, which protected shipping and sought to prevent Mexican invasion of Texas by sea.

Center: Travis portrait. 1/102-562, Courtesy of Texas State Library and Archives Commission.



Galveston's distinctive 19th-century heritage is featured across the island on nearly 100 THC markers, including a dozen in the courtyard of the Galveston County Courthouse. Be sure to look for the oversized 1963 tourist marker for Galveston Island at the entry to the Port Bolivar Ferry.



Texas Revolution-era treasures await at Galveston's **Bryan Museum** ([thebryanmuseum.org](http://thebryanmuseum.org), 409-632-7685). Most significant is the short sword that was used by Texian soldier Joel Robison when he helped capture Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto. The museum features several other artifacts from the Republic of Texas period along with rare documents in its extensive archives, including Santa Anna's order book from the 1835–36 Texas Campaign.

For those who venture to see the marker at the ferry, it's worth boarding the boat to Bolivar for another distinctive heritage experience. After about 20 minutes of viewing dolphins and sea birds from atop the ferry deck, disembark onto Bolivar Peninsula and travel a mile east to **Fort Travis Seashore Park** ([bolivarpeninsula.texas.com](http://bolivarpeninsula.texas.com), 409-934-8100).

Visitors are immediately greeted by several enormous concrete battery fortifications dating to 1898. The stately structures harken back to an era when the U.S. military fortified the gulf coast

in defense of adversaries before and during World War I.

The site's early history is tied to the Texas Revolution era. In 1836, soon after Texas declared independence from Mexico, Republic of Texas President David Burnet ordered a fort to be constructed across the bay. The octagonal earth and timber fortification armed with six and 12-pound gun mounts was later named Fort Travis in honor of William B. Travis. Later relocated to its current site and renamed Fort Green, the triangular fortification was most likely destroyed by

Confederate troops when they surrendered Galveston and the surrounding area to Union troops.

"The location of Fort Travis and its two batteries corresponds with the original function of the fort," Brinkman says. "It's the most complete concentration of coastal artillery batteries on the Texas Gulf Coast."

The batteries are mostly off-limits for visitors, although they can climb the encompassing earthen hillsides and peer through the chain-link fence or take photos of the imposing poured-concrete structures. The site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and features a THC marker.

For those unable to catch the Port Bolivar Ferry, consider riding across the Houston Ship Channel on the **Lynchburg Ferry** ([hcp2.com/road-bridge/lynchburg-ferry](http://hcp2.com/road-bridge/lynchburg-ferry), 281-424-3521). This modern vessel's route has ties to the 1820s, when Nathaniel Lynch established a ferry service nearby. Lynch, one of Stephen F. Austin's first colonists, was granted exclusive privilege

to operate the ferry by the San Felipe *Ayuntamiento* (governing council).

Lynch passed away in 1837, but his family continued to operate the ferry service until 1848. It outlasted fires and storms, and evolved from a cable-based operation to the modern 85-ton diesel-powered boats. The THC marker commemorating this historic route is somewhat challenging to find (on the northern end of the ferry crossing in the midst of a surreal industrial scene), but it's a fascinating diversion and serves as a reminder of the area's growth over the past two centuries.

From the Lynchburg Ferry marker, visitors can see the San Jacinto Monument looming over the bay. Although **San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site** ([tpwd.texas.gov](http://tpwd.texas.gov), 281-479-2431) is not an unknown revolution location, it contains several markers and monuments that are often overlooked by visitors entering and exiting the 570-foot-tall monument.

Just west of the towering column is a small graveyard with headstones honoring many soldiers who perished at the Battle of San Jacinto. A THC historical marker commemorates Lorenzo de Zavala, vice president of the Republic of Texas, who devoted his life to fighting against tyranny. Several other stone monuments dating to the early 1900s represent the State of Texas' dedication to erecting physical reminders of the heroes who helped forge the Lone Star State.

"Most Texans can rattle off the Alamo, Goliad, and San Jacinto, and those are certainly big chapters in the story of the Texas Revolution," Brinkman remarks. "But look in between and beyond for important factors like settlement, family, economics, and politics. You'll be rewarded by a deeper understanding and a richer experience of a seminal period of history with human scale and global impact."





For more stories, photographs, and videos or information about the Texas Independence Trail Region, please visit [thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov).

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Surreal photo ops await near the Lynchburg Ferry, where history meets modern industry.

#### BIRDERS

Fort Anahuac Park features birding towers on a scenic pier overlooking Trinity Bay.

#### HISTORIC LODGING

Galveston's 1911 Hotel Galvez, the "Queen of the Gulf," exudes Victorian elegance.

#### LOCAL EATS

Hardhead's Icehouse & Grill on Bolivar Peninsula offers old-school seafood classics.



# FROM DISPUTED BORDERS TO MANIFEST DESTINY

## Explore the Undertold Stories of the U.S.-Mexico War

Text by Bob Brinkman, THC Historical Markers Program Coordinator

The steamship *Dayton* began life in 1835 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Robert Beer oversaw its construction, and often captained the 111-ton sidewheeler steamship on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. At the time, he couldn't imagine that the *Dayton* would be moving goods and people along the Texas coast and between Galveston and Houston only four years later.

The *Dayton*—along with many forgotten skirmishes and determined volunteers—would go on to play an underappreciated role in the U.S.-Mexico War of 1846–48. Several of these subjects are now commemorated via county and community names across Texas and on official Texas Historical Commission markers.

In the decade following independence, relations between the Republic of Texas and Mexico were strained, with a series of occupations, expeditions, attacks, and counterattacks. In March 1845, outgoing President John Tyler signed a joint congressional resolution for annexing Texas to the United States. After the terms of annexation were accepted by a convention of the Republic on July 4, new president James K. Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to lead federal troops from Fort Jesup, Louisiana to the Nueces River in Texas.

The men came by sea, leaving New Orleans and landing on July 26, 1845 at St. Joseph Island (also known as San José Island near present-day Port Aransas). Lt. Daniel T. Chandler of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment waded ashore from the *USS Alabama* and planted a flagpole atop a sand hill. This was the first time the Stars and Stripes flew over the Lone Star State. Shortly after, the army contracted

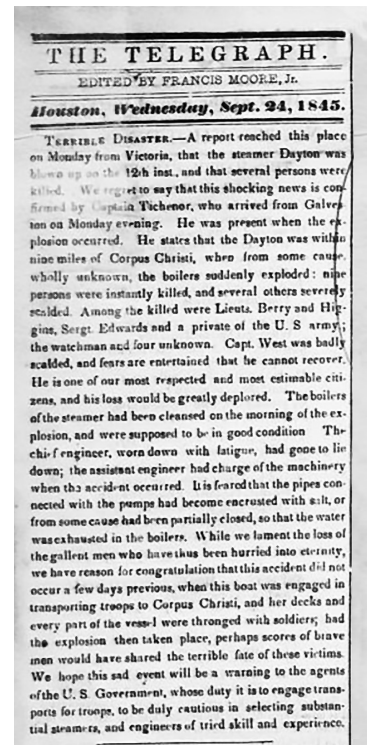
the *Dayton* to transport men and materials from the island to the army encampment at Corpus Christi.

Following numerous trips over the intervening weeks, a series of tragic explosions occurred on September 12 aboard the *Dayton*. The ship had left the mainland after delivering supplies and was returning to the island with a party of noncommissioned officers and enlisted men.

One of the boilers exploded, killing two officers, when the ship was off McGloin's Bluff. Then the second boiler exploded, killing more officers and crew.

The victims were buried in the first federal military cemetery in Texas, now known as Old Bayview Cemetery in Corpus Christi.

These men—seven killed that day, and three who died later—became the first casualties in the conflict between the United States and Mexico, officially declared as war the following May. In his journal, Col. Ethan Allen Hitchcock wrote, "14th Sept. A military funeral took place to-day at the burial-ground which I selected. It is on the brow of the hill northwest of camp, and commands a view of the Nueces and Corpus Christi Bay. It is a beautiful spot." The State of Texas placed a historical marker at Old Bayview Cemetery in 1967.



An often untold yet historically significant part of the story is the fact that one man made a last-minute decision to not step aboard the *Dayton*. Lt. Ulysses S. Grant, future Commanding General of the Army and President of the United States, avoided the tragedy of that fateful day.

Above: *Telegraph* clipping describes the *Dayton* disaster.

Left: THC markers honor U.S.-Mexico War veterans in Corpus Christi's Old Bayview cemetery.

Opposite: George Wilkins Kendall. Courtesy, Kendall Family Papers, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Arlington, Texas.



## Little-Remembered No More

Many additional stories from the U.S.-Mexico war are little-remembered today. For example, one of the most important figures of the time was George Wilkins Kendall, who was born in New Hampshire and worked his way across the country as a printer by way of Vermont, Washington D.C., New York City (with famed newspaperman Horace Greeley), and Alabama. With Francis Lumsden, he founded the New Orleans *Picayune*, still the city's leading newspaper.

Kendall advocated for the annexation of Texas and came here in 1841 to join the ill-fated Santa Fe Expedition, which sought to increase trade with Texas and stake a claim on the Santa Fe territory. More than 300 men were captured east of Santa Fe, arrested, and marched to Mexico City, then Perote Prison near Veracruz for several months. The *Picayune* published more than 20 of Kendall's letters, and his subsequent book *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition* became a best-seller. Kendall's *Picayune* favored war with Mexico to expand American territory; when war broke out, he went where the action was, becoming the nation's first foreign war correspondent.

In the 1850s, Kendall moved to Texas and became a leading stockman in the state's nascent sheep industry. He promoted sheep raising and the Hill Country, where he established his largest ranch near Boerne. When a new county was carved out of Kerr County in 1862, it was named Kendall County in his honor. The State of Texas has placed historical markers and plaques for Kendall at his ranches in Comal and Kendall counties (both placed for the 1936 Texas Centennial), at his grave in Boerne, and near his home in the eponymous Kendall County town of Kendalia.



The U.S.-Mexico War and its associated preludes and postscripts were among the watershed events in North American history. Skirmishes and battles along the disputed Rio Grande led to a formal declaration of war, and American troops were led across Mexico by many of the officers who would become the commanding generals of the Civil War some 15 years later.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in 1848, gave the United States an additional half a million square miles of territory, fixing the boundaries of the nation at the Pacific Ocean and the Rio Grande. Through this war, the United States asserted itself as a stronger global power and Texas was firmly established in the national consciousness as a land of contrasts—a melting pot within a melting pot.

## TEXAS MILITARY INSTALLATION NAMESAKES

War with Mexico left an indelible impression on Texas, not only from the training and battles here, but also on the map of the Lone Star State after it joined the United States. At least 32 camps and forts were named for soldiers and others involved in the war. Most of these sites were established in the decade following the end of the war with the westward movement of the Texas frontier.

Camp Blake (VAL VERDE)	** Lt. Jacob E. Blake
Camp Cooper (THROCKMORTON)	Adjutant General Samuel Cooper
Camp Crawford (WEBB)	Secretary of War George W. Crawford
Camp Harney (ZAPATA)	Col. William Selby Harney
Camp Irwin (CALHOUN)	Capt. James R. Irwin
Camp Merrill (JIM WELLS)	Maj. Hamilton Wilcox Merrill
Camp Terrett (SUTTON)	** Lt. John C. Terrett
Camp Wood (REAL)	Maj. George W. F. Wood
Fort Belknap (YOUNG)	Gen. William Goldsmith Belknap
Fort Bliss (EL PASO)	Col. William Wallace Smith Bliss
Fort Brown (CAMERON)	** Maj. Jacob Brown
Fort Chadbourne (COKE)	** Lt. Theodore Lincoln Chadbourne
Fort Clark (KINNEY)	** Maj. John B. Clark
Fort Croghan (BURNET)	Col. George Croghan
Fort D. A. Russell (PRESIDIO)	Gen. David Allen Russell
Fort Davis (JEFF DAVIS)	Col. Jefferson Davis
Fort Duncan (MAVERICK)	Col. James Duncan
Fort Ewell (LA SALLE)	Capt. Richard S. Ewell
Fort Gates (CORYELL)	Maj. Collinson Reed Gates
Fort Graham (HILL)	** Col. William Montrose Graham
Fort Inge (UVALDE)	** Lt. Zebulon M.P. Inge
Fort Lincoln (MEDINA)	** Capt. George Lincoln
Fort Martin Scott (GILLESPIE)	** Maj. Martin Scott
Fort Mason (MASON)	** Lt. George T. Mason
Fort McIntosh (WEBB)	** Col. James S. McIntosh
Fort McKavett (MENARD)	** Capt. Henry McKavett
Fort Merrill (LIVE OAK)	** Capt. Moses E. Merrill
Fort Polk (NUECES)	President James K. Polk
Fort Quitman (HUDSPETH)	Gen. John A. Quitman
Fort Richardson (JACK)	Gen. Israel Bush Richardson
Fort Ringgold (STARR)	** Maj. Samuel Ringgold
Fort Worth (TARRANT)	Gen. William Jenkins Worth

\*\* Indicates soldiers killed in action in the U.S.-Mexico War



# TWO CENTURIES OF MILITARY HERITAGE

## Recently Designated National Register Properties Honor Texas' Wartime History

Text by Gregory Smith, State National Register Coordinator

Each spring, many Texans commemorate the state's independence by visiting historic sites associated with the 1836 Texas Revolution. The state's proud military legacy extends beyond this significant event and includes hundreds of lesser-known locales covering the past two centuries. For those interested in Texas' wide-ranging historic military sites, consider visiting the following National Register of Historic Places properties.

### **First Shot Monuments Historic District: Cost, Gonzales County**

The First Shot Monuments Historic District represents early-20th century efforts to commemorate a pivotal event that marked the beginning of the Texas Revolution. In October 1835, Texians under the "Come and Take It" banner fired a cannon toward Mexican forces west of Gonzales in the present-day community of Cost, earning Gonzales the moniker "the Lexington of Texas."

In 1903, Gonzales County students marked the approximate site of the cannon shot with a small monument. The event was later selected for special commemoration as part of the statewide Texas Centennial celebration, with the 1937 dedication of a granite and bronze monument by San Antonio artist Waldine Tauch. That same year, the Texas Highway Department completed a mile-long spur connecting the Centennial monument park with the 1903 dedication



site, creating one of the first Texas highways designed for the sole purpose of providing vehicular access to a historic site.

### **Fannin Battleground State Historic Site: Fannin, Goliad County**

Fannin Battleground State Historic Site is a 13.6-acre state-owned commemorative park honoring the March 1836 Battle of Coleto Creek, fought between forces commanded by Col. James W. Fannin and Mexican Gen. José de Urrea. The parcel contains the area believed to be where Col. Fannin and his troops dug in and attempted to defend their position.

Following the loss of the Alamo the previous month, the Battle of Coleto Creek also ended in defeat for the Texians from a military point of view. However, both losses came to represent the cause for independence and inspired Texas soldiers to persevere—thereafter, they charged into the final battle at San Jacinto with the rallying cry, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!" The property is significant as the 1836 battle site, and as a commemorative site that was first permanently marked in 1894 and subsequently acquired and improved as a state park. It is now owned by the Texas Historical Commission and serves as one of the agency's 22 state historic sites.

### **Brooks School of Aerospace Medicine: San Antonio, Bexar County**

Brooks Field was established in 1917 as "Kelly Field No. 5" and renamed in honor of Cadet Sidney Johnston Brooks, Jr. the following year. In 1959, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) assigned the School of Aerospace Medicine to Brooks to consolidate aviation and space medicine programs at a single base.

Brooks provided NASA and the USAF with innovative space medicine research, including altitude and pressure experiments and space food nutritional studies. These programs were crucial to the success of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo space programs. Brooks Air Force Base was decommissioned in 2002, and was designated a local historic district in 2003. Buildings in the district are generally simple





flat-roofed brick facilities reflective of the International Style. Note: The Brooks School is not listed in the NR; it is an NPS-Certified Local Historic District.

## NATIONAL CEMETERIES

### Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery: San Antonio, Bexar County

### Fort Bliss National Cemetery: El Paso, El Paso County

The Fort Sam Houston and Fort Bliss National Cemeteries are two of the seven national cemeteries established between World War I and World War II to address rapidly depleting burial space at existing national cemeteries.

Fort Sam Houston created a post cemetery in 1924; in 1931, the War Department designated the site as part of a 60-acre addition to the small San Antonio National Cemetery. Designated a national cemetery in 1937, the burial ground had approximately 1,398 interments by 1941, and averaged about 187 interments per year by 1943. The cemetery includes the graves of 12 Medal of Honor recipients, 27 Buffalo Soldiers, and 141 foreign prisoners of war. Fort Bliss National Cemetery is on land formerly belonging to the Fort Bliss Military Reservation, which the U.S. established in the late 1840s after the U.S.-Mexican War. The 1893 post cemetery expanded after World War I, and was designated as a national cemetery in 1936. The army interred its first burial in 1940. By 2014 it contained 40,283 gravesites, including those of four Medal of Honor recipients, 42 foreign prisoners of war, and three Japanese-American civilian internees.



The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation, and includes more than 3,300 listings in Texas. Listing affords properties a measure of protection from the impact of federally funded projects, as well as access to technical expertise and grant funds to facilitate preservation. Income-producing properties are also eligible for federal and state tax benefits for sympathetic rehabilitation work.

**For more information about the program,  
visit [thc.texas.gov/nrhp](http://thc.texas.gov/nrhp).**

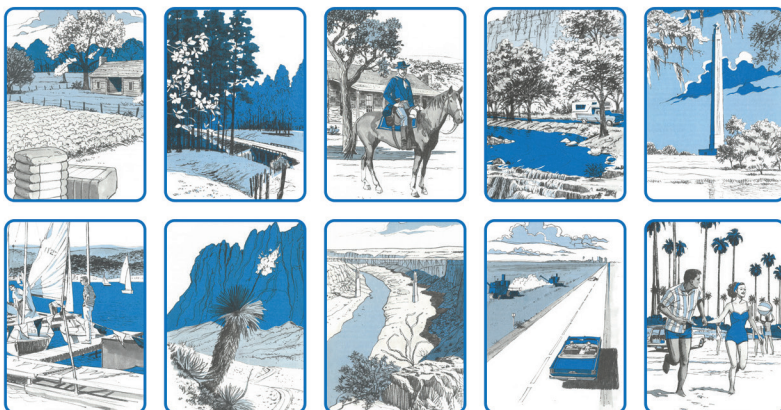
Opposite, top: The pavilion at Fannin Battleground State Historic Site.

Opposite, bottom: The granite and bronze monument honoring the first shot of the Texas Revolution in Gonzales.

Top, right: Fort Bliss National Cemetery in El Paso dates to 1893.

# ENTER TO WIN A TEXAS ADVENTURE!

Why take a daytrip when you can  
Stay an Extra Day? Between now and  
December, enter to win a trip for two in  
and around historic towns in all 10  
Texas Heritage Trail Regions.



**STAY AN EXTRA DAY**  
*Sweepstakes*

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE TEXAS HERITAGE TRAIL REGIONS

[extradayintexas.com](http://extradayintexas.com)  
[#extradayintx](https://twitter.com/extradayintx)





# RESHAPING TEXAS HISTORY

## San Felipe de Austin Celebrates Grand Opening of New Facility

Text by Heather McBride, THC Senior Communications Specialist, photos by Patrick Hughey

Texas history lovers who visit the new 10,000 square-foot state-of-the-art museum at San Felipe de Austin will not be disappointed. Opening on April 27, the museum offers visitors a chance to see unique artifacts and interactive displays related to this pivotal location in Texas history. See the desk that once belonged to Stephen F. Austin; witness an operating 1830s cast-iron printing press like the one used to publish William Travis' "Victory or Death" letter; and peruse hundreds of artifacts recovered during archeological investigations at the THC's state historic site. The largest exhibit is an 1830s log cabin rebuilt inside the museum.

The museum also includes several custom murals that reflect themes for telling San Felipe's real stories. In addition, the museum incorporates several film and multimedia elements that allow visitors to interact with images and information. One of the most exciting digital experiences is a wall-sized touch screen that depicts the layout of the historic downtown. Because the entire village of San Felipe was burned during the Texas Revolution's Runaway Scrape, the digital mural provides a compelling representation of the site prior to 1836. Visitors can engage with the historic site and its stories by touching animations on the large screen.

Along with the new museum experience, outdoor learning opportunities will include tours of the grounds that reflect the original plat of the community, an outdoor map allowing visitors to better understand Austin's grand vision for his

town, and occasional active archeological excavations and lab analysis. Weekend programming will feature authors, historians, teachers, and other experts sharing their knowledge through engaging tours and programs.

"We're excited to incorporate archeology into our public programming and we think visitors will find it very

compelling," said Bryan McAuley, site manager at San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site. "We know they appreciate the authenticity of museum experiences. Being able to offer real-time encounters with these important research efforts should help visitors connect to the project in unique and meaningful ways."

The San Felipe de Austin museum will also offer special events to celebrate important historical themes, including Texas Archeology Month in October and the annual Father of Texas Celebration in November. In addition, the museum features a temporary gallery that hosts seasonal exhibits related to the town and its history.

"We truly believe the museum experience at San Felipe de Austin will reshape the way Texans think about the

Mexican Texas era and the eventual march to independence," said McAuley.

Efforts are underway to complete staff recruitment and cultivate volunteers in anticipation of a busy spring and summer season. Plan your trip soon to experience this new addition to the Texas museum landscape.



Top: The new San Felipe de Austin museum.

Bottom: This 1830s R. Hoe and Company, Smith-style press, displayed in the museum, is very similar to the one used by the Baker and Bordens print.

**San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site**  
220 2nd St.  
San Felipe, TX 77473  
979-885-2181  
[visitsanfelipedeAustin.com](http://visitsanfelipedeAustin.com)



**Fulton Mansion State Historic Site is offering free hard hat tours, post-Hurricane Harvey. DONATIONS ARE WELCOME!**



## NEWS BRIEFS

### FULTON MANSION SEEKS HARVEY ASSISTANCE

When Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Gulf Coast on August 25, 2017, it severely damaged the THC's Fulton Mansion in Rockport, where Harvey made landfall.

As a result of the devastating storm, the home suffered significant damage, including complete destruction of its three shellcrete chimneys, loss of the flat metal roof, and major water damage to the interior plaster, collections, and carpets.

The Friends of the Texas Historical Commission is currently raising funds to repair the \$1 million in damage caused by the hurricane. Please visit [thcfriends.org](http://thcfriends.org) to donate to repair efforts.

### THC WEB FILM HIGHLIGHTS GOLIAD MASSACRE

The THC offers a free web film about the Goliad Massacre that uses innovative 360-degree video technology, providing a new way to experience this dramatic historical event.

It features new information and footage of artifacts, the location of Col. James W. Fannin's death, and details regarding the Battle of Coleto Creek.

The 360-degree video helps viewers gain a deeper understanding of the tragic story that played an important role in the 1836 march toward Texas independence. The film is available at [thc.texas.gov/goliad-massacre](http://thc.texas.gov/goliad-massacre).

### TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION ANNOUNCES PRESERVATION GRANT RECIPIENTS

The THC recently awarded grant funding to six projects from its Texas Preservation Trust Fund (TPTF). The six projects selected for TPTF grants are located in the state-declared disaster area that sustained damage from Hurricane Harvey.

The **Heritage Society** in Houston houses archeological collections that were damaged by Hurricane Harvey, including artifacts from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The 1953 **John Biggers Mural**, "Contribution of Negro Women to American Life and Education," was damaged in Houston due to water infiltration.

Built in 1847, the **Mary Christian Burleson Homestead** sustained significant roof damage when winds from Hurricane Harvey blew through Elgin.

The 1935 **Recreation Hall** at Rockport's Goose Island State Park is one of Texas' first Civilian Conservation Corps buildings. Its porch roof was destroyed by Harvey.

The **Lee County Courthouse** was fully restored through the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program 20 years ago. During Hurricane Harvey, the courthouse experienced water infiltration through the roof, walls, and windows, creating an urgent need for remediation.

The **Refugio County Courthouse** suffered direct damage from the hurricane with more than 30 destroyed windows. The emergency TPTF grant will fund a feasibility study for the county to determine the best course of action for repair.

For more information call 512-463-6094 or visit [thc.texas.gov/tptf](http://thc.texas.gov/tptf).

### APPLY NOW TO BECOME A MAIN STREET COMMUNITY

The application period is now open for cities to apply to the THC's Texas Main Street Program.

Each year the THC may select up to five Texas cities to participate in the program. Local Main Street programs receive a wide range of services and technical expertise from the THC, including design and historic preservation, planning, economic development, organizational management, and training.

Optional letters of intent are due to the THC by June 2, and applications are due July 31. Application information and the webinar details are available on the THC's website at [thc.texas.gov/mainstreet](http://thc.texas.gov/mainstreet).



## NOTICE

Texas law requires quarterly state newsletters to notify recipients that to continue receiving the publication, they must request it once each year. To maintain your free subscription to *The Medallion*, please mail or fax this portion of the page (including the mailing label) to:

### *The Medallion* Circulation

P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, TX 78711-2276  
Fax: 512-463-6374

Signature

Date

Email

### *The Medallion*

Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, TX 78711-2276

PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTIN, TX  
PERMIT NO. 1938

# WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

**Know Your Texas History?** Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email [medallion@thc.texas.gov](mailto:medallion@thc.texas.gov). Limit one prize annually per contestant.

**Need a Clue?** Located in the Texas Pecos Trail Region, this Main Street City contains an eclectic mix of architectural styles in its historic downtown district.



### Answer to the photo from the last issue:

The photo at left is the 1904 Rosenberg Library in Galveston. Considered the oldest free public library in continuous operation in Texas, it succeeded an operation established by the Chamber of Commerce in 1870. Congratulations and prizes go to the first three readers who correctly identified the site: Allison Chambers of San Antonio, Judith Martin of Bulverde, and Natalia Martinez-Fletcher of Galveston. Thanks to all who participated!

