

San Jacinto News

APRIL 2015

State Historian at Annual Dinner

This year the annual San Jacinto Day Dinner will honor an organization that has made a major impact to the operations of the San Jacinto Museum of History - the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Through historical interpretation, physical plant maintenance and upkeep, and active support of events such as the annual fun run, festival and reenactment, TPWD has made an impact in both the day-to-day and extraordinary activities of the museum.

The event will take place on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at the Houston Country Club, beginning at 6:30. Guest speaker will be Bill O'Neal, Texas State Historian and author of the upcoming book *Sam Houston: A Study in Leadership*. Ticket availability is limited; contact Mequet Werlin at sanjacevents@gmail.com or 713-703-9993.



April Events Commemorate the Battle of San Jacinto

The largest battle reenactment in the state is the centerpiece of the admission-free San Jacinto Day Festival, held on Saturday, April 18, 2015, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free parking is available along Independence Parkway, with shuttles running to the battleground. A parking map and an entertainment schedule will be available at <http://www.sanjacinto-museum.org> prior to the event to allow festival guests to play their day. New entertainment this year includes electric mechanical bull rides for kids, the "All Stars" Youth Banjo Band, pony rides, and Amber & The Rascals playing a variety of music from many decades.

On San Jacinto Day itself, April 21, the official ceremony commemorating the Battle of San Jacinto will take place at 11:00 a.m. at the San Jacinto Monument. Come celebrate the victory that won Texas' independence.



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Annual Lunch Enjoyed by Members

Thanks to Houston historian and hotel owner Miki Lusk Norton, members of the San Jacinto Museum enjoyed a history-filled visit to the Lancaster Hotel on February 7. After touring some of the rooms and enjoying a delicious lunch, members learned about the former Auditorium Hotel, and its founders' place in Houston history.



Miki Lusk Norton speaking of the Lancaster Hotel's history.

Letter from the President

Dear Supporter,

As a cultural institution embedded in a community, the San Jacinto Museum tries to make an impact with our constituents. One way we do so is to personally involve our neighbors as an essential part of museum programs. We try to increase the number of people who participate by giving them a meaningful role to play in supporting our educational mission. Our staff is always developing creative ways to provide occasions for community members to be engaged in museum activities.

An excellent example of this would be the amazing growth of the museum's San Jacinto Texas Independence Fun Run, established in 2012 as a 5K run/walk attracting 160 participants. This event provides a venue for community members to experience the park in a different way while engaging in a fitness activity; it also allows individuals to support the museum's educational mission financially at a moderate cost. In 2013 a 1K kids' race was added to involve children and families, and in 2015 a 10K run was added to provide a serious training event for longer distance runners. Added to the event is a separate 5K walk for those of us whose spirits soar, but whose bodies would rather walk. This year over 430 athletes participated in the event, including people who may not otherwise have visited the museum; teams from some of our regular corporate members also participated.

Events like the fun run require, and receive, contributions from each and every staff member. On race day, much of the staff is on the race route from before daybreak until after the event is over and everything is placed back where it belongs. Many of the staff help on their day off; several bring family members to assist. But there is always one person who takes the lead in organizing, planning, and executing any event and for the fun run that lead is taken by Carolyn Campbell, seconded by Dawnell Vanderbrink. Even Carolyn's husband, children, and grandchildren come out and help with all the details before the races start; her family members also participated in the 10K, 5K, and 1K runs this year.

Although I have focused here on this one event, there are other events throughout the year that call forth the efforts of our staff and that of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; you can read about some of these events elsewhere in this newsletter. And there are a variety of opportunities for individuals to be involved in the museum on various levels throughout the year, from attending one of our dinners, to volunteering at the Festival or in the library, to giving a gift membership to a friend or family member. The larger picture is the response of people from many different communities who support and participate in museum activities, making sure Texas' wonderful heritage is not forgotten.



Larry Spasic, President,
San Jacinto Museum of History



Left: Paul Chavez sets the pace for the 1K Kids' Run.
Center: The 5K walk.
Right: Larry Spasic and TPWD Park Superintendent Bill Irwin cross the finish line.



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First Choice Emergency Room in La Porte recently donated this new wheelchair for the use of visitors to the museum. Megan Cathey, center, of FCER, with museum staff Carolyn Campbell, left, and Lisa Struthers, right.

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2015 San Jacinto Day Dinner

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The San Jacinto Museum of History
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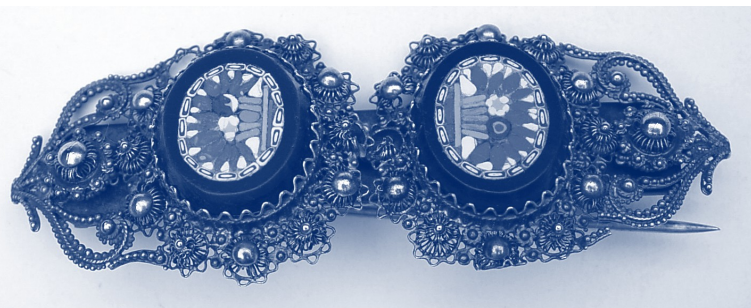
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Veterans' Artifacts On Exhibit

Ever since the major update to the San Jacinto Museum's website, many people have enjoyed visiting the Veteran Biographies pages. Filled with facts about the veterans' lives before, during and after the Battle of San Jacinto, they are some of the most popular pages on the museum's site, along with the Curriculum Guide for Teaching Texas History.

One of the features on the veteran pages is the ability to see items related to the veterans. While the expected firearms, knives and items used during the Texas Revolution are displayed with this feature, work tools, jewelry, and artifacts that reflect the soldiers' lives beyond the battlefield are also included. Many of these items that recall special events like a silk vest worn at a wedding or a foldable ruler used in everyday life, as well as items owned by the veterans' immediate families, are in the new lobby exhibit, *Worldly Goods*, on display now through early summer.

In fact, the museum has so many fascinating



Gold filigree brooch set with two oval blue stones, inset with multi-colored micro-mosaics, given to Laura Harrison Jack by her new husband, William Houston Jack.

items once owned by San Jacinto veterans—including a hand-painted pillowcase that includes Masonic imagery, a doctor's eyeglasses, a mosaic brooch given to a bride by her new husband at the time of their wedding—that there will be two exhibits in the lobby from these materials. So come out this spring to see some fantastic artifacts from the families of veterans such as Washington Anderson, Dr. Alexander Ewing, and Robert Benedict Russell and then visit in the summer to see other San Jacinto veteran-owned items from the museum's collections.

Other Exhibit Information

- Ending in May - *Making a Mark, Leaving a Legacy.*
- Coming this summer - a look at the U.S.-Mexican War; and an exhibit featuring railroads.
- Virtual exhibits at <http://sanjacinto-museum.smugmug.com/OnlineExhibits> including Three-Dimensional Valentines.



arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums

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