

San Jacinto News

OCTOBER 2015

Repair Work to Begin

Some needed repairs to the San Jacinto Monument will begin this fall. The primary work concerns the doorways and windows around the base of the Monument. The interior support structure of the soffits will be repaired, a thermal barrier between the interior and exterior installed, and the interior and exterior doors will be refurbished. Additional work will be done to eliminate the cause of moisture damage in the foyer and women's restroom.

"Doors and windows will be repaired over the course of the project so visitors will always have access," says William Irwin, Park Superintendent. "Although the construction schedule is not yet finalized, the project should be completed by February 2016." The contract was awarded to KBR.

Special Evening Honors Astros' Biggio

This year's Special Evening With Texas History promises to be one of the most memorable of the annual dinners. On Thursday, November 5, 2015, supporters of the San Jacinto Museum of History will gather at the San Jacinto Monument for a cocktail reception, a special viewing of two new exhibits, a salute to veterans, and dinner. The evening will honor Hall of Fame member Houston Astro Craig Biggio. Biggio was

inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame earlier this year. A second baseman, catcher, and outfielder, he played for the Houston Astros from 1988 to 2007, and was a member of six Astros playoff teams. He holds Astros records for the most games played, at bats, hits, and runs scored. Biggio also holds the National League record for the most times leading off a game with a home run. He was the first player in Astros history to

accumulate 3,000 hits, and his No. 7 jersey was retired in 2008. Biggio is in his eighth season as a special assistant to the General Manager of the Houston Astros, working on player development, talent evaluation, and community development. He will be presented with the San Jacinto Star Award.

Dinner sponsorships and tickets are available; contact Carolyn Campbell at 281.479.2421 for more information and reservations.

New Exhibit Captures Monterrey

In September, 1846, U.S. General Zachary Taylor's army fought Mexican General Pedro de Ampudia's forces for control of the northern Mexican city of Monterrey in a bloody three-day battle, the third main conflict of the U.S. – Mexican War. Though directed to establish a defensive line near Saltillo, Ampudia elected to make a stand at Monterrey as defeats

and numerous retreats had badly damaged the morale of his forces. Taylor elected to move his force of around 15,000 men up the Rio Grande to Camargo and then march overland 125 miles to Monterrey.

Upon reaching Camargo, Taylor found that he only possessed provisions to support half of his men. As a result, the remainder of the army was left behind. Departing

Camargo, the American vanguard was led by General William J. Worth. Arriving just north of Monterrey on September 19, Worth faced a well-defended city of around 10,000 people that was protected by natural and man-made defenses. Taylor determined that, while the defenses were strong, Ampudia's

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Road to Monterrey by Samuel Chamberlain.



Letter from the President

Dear Supporter,

If you have an interest in culture, you are interested in history, in fact they are one and the same. A quick glance at a dictionary will confirm the definition of culture as an integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behavior; the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations; the characteristic features shared by a people.

History shapes, molds, and interprets social practices in a way to allow one to understand the human experience. For example, history informs the interpreting of our nation's institutions through an explanation of their establishment and the causes leading to their creation. Additionally, history gives perspective to our shared and divergent sets of values and practices.

This interpretation and perspective is exactly why history matters and is how we learn by studying the past. History's polar opposite is the ignoring of our collective experiences, followed by repeating the same mistakes and expecting a different outcome! That alone makes the understanding of, appreciation for, and the study of history vital to each citizen of our country, indeed to each individual in our world.

Thank you once again for your support of our mission.



Larry Spasic

President, San Jacinto Museum of History

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New Acquisitions

The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Library has been the recipient of several gifts to its holdings. The first, a collection of papers of Guy M. Bryan, includes Bryan's notes on the Fredonian Matter, Austin's Colony decrees, Sam Houston's 1836 campaign, and the Austin & Williams and Robertson Colonies, as well as a brief submitted by the Chamber of Commerce of Houston, Texas, to the Federal Farm Loan Board in 1916. The second is a signed drawing or cartoon of the Monument's frieze by William McVey, the sculptor who designed the frieze. Framed, it is about 88 inches long. This gift comes to us from Mr. and Mrs. David M. Smith.

The library has also received a copy of the special edition of *Sam Chamberlain's Mexican War*; this copy is number 63 of 100, signed by the author, William Goetzmann. A copy of the 1996 edition of *My Confession* by Samuel Chamberlain was also donated.

Veterans Honored

With gratitude for their service to their country, the San Jacinto Museum of History will offer free admission to all museum venues to veterans and their family members who accompany them during the week in which Veterans Day falls. Sunday, November 8, through Saturday, November 14, veterans, active duty military personnel, and their families and guests may visit the Observation Deck, the Jesse H. Jones Theatre for Texas Studies, and the exhibit *A Destined Conflict: The U.S. - Mexican War* at no charge.

Thank You to Recent Donors

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Save the Date

October 1-31, 2015 Museum artifacts are part of the online exhibit for the Gulf Coast Reads simultaneous reading of *The Promise*, by Ann Weisgarber. <http://www.gulfcoastreads.org>

November 5, 2015 *A Special Evening with Texas History*, honoring Craig Biggio.

February 6, 2016 Annual Member Lunch, at Willie G's Seafood and Steaks, 1605 Post Oak Blvd. Guest speaker Dr. Paul Spellman.

March 5, 2016 5th Annual Texas Independence Fun Run/Walk; 10K, 5K, and 1K kid's components, registration begins November 1, 2015, online at <http://www.active.com>.

Continued from "MONTERREY" on page 1. reserves would have difficulty covering the gaps between them.

With this in mind, Taylor determined that many of the strong points could be isolated and taken. He planned a two-pronged attack of the city with his men striking at the eastern and western approaches. The three days saw heavy casualties on both sides and fighting was particularly fierce at Independence and Federation Hills. The Americans eventually avoided fighting in the streets and advanced by knocking holes through the walls of adjoining buildings to drive the Mexican forces to the center of the city. Though a tedious process, they eventually achieved victory.

Entering surrender negotiations, the two sides agreed to terms that called for Ampudia to surrender the city in exchange for an eight-week armistice and freedom for his troops. Learning of Taylor's actions, President James Polk was irate stating that army's job was to "kill the enemy" and not to make deals.

Many beautiful and haunting works of art from this key battle in the conflict are on display in the exhibit, *A Destined Conflict: The U.S. - Mexican War*, including watercolors by U.S. Private Samuel



Cathedral at Monterrey. Army Resting in Foreground. Sam Walker's Texans at the Surrender of Monterrey, by Samuel Chamberlain.

Chamberlain who, while not present at the battle, used first-hand accounts and his own personal experiences in the war to create his artwork.

San Jacinto Veterans Continued Military Service

The exhibit *A Destined Conflict: The U.S. - Mexican War* begins by looking at the Texas Revolution as a proximate cause of the U.S. Mexican War. For many of the men who fought at San Jacinto, there is a more direct tie between the two wars: over forty of the San Jacinto veterans also fought in the later war.

Possibly the best known to lovers of Texas history is Mirabeau B. Lamar, who led the cavalry at San Jacinto, and was the second President of the Republic of Texas. In 1846 Lamar joined the army of General Taylor at Matamoros, and fought in the Battle of Monterrey on September 19, 1846 as lieutenant colonel. A biographical sketch in the museum's Mirabeau B. Lamar Papers, written by Edward Fontaine in 1848, includes the following: "A party of the Texians accompanied by some of the Missisippians

[sic], were temporarily placed by Governor Henderson under the command of Lamar, whose men commenced at once to advance towards the Main-Plaza by



Mirabeau Lamar.

cutting their way through stone walls and fighting from the tops of the houses, not being able to keep the streets, as they were raked by the artillery as well as by the Infantry. General Lamar, however, greatly fatigued with the exercises of the day, and scarcely able to continue on foot, was compelled to mount his horse and face the enemy in full exposure. In this manner he cheered and animated his men, until he had charged almost up to the very mouth of the enemy's cannon." Lamar's pay voucher, signed by J. Pinckney Henderson and Zachary Taylor, is on exhibit.

Other San Jacinto veterans who fought at Monterrey include Robert Kemp Goodloe, Thomas Green, and Walter P. Lane, who left a good account of the battle. "The enemy was behind fortifications in strong force, while we were firing through the loopholes. When the United States Artillery company, by main force, pulled a six-pounder on top of the hill, we opened with that on the palace. After a few discharges we made a breach in the walls, charged through, and took the palace in gallant style....By nightfall, we had got within fifty yards of the main plaza, which was filled with their troops. Col. Walker and myself had the honor of sleeping in Gen. Ampudia's bed, their commander-in-chief, whom we had just routed out of his quarters. As I had to relieve guard at 2 o'clock, and not knowing at what minute they might attack us, I laid down by the side of the colonel, *sans ceremonies*, with *boots and spurs on*."

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The San Jacinto Museum of History
Association was chartered in 1938 to preserve
and revisualize the early history of Texas.

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Valuable Hints for Ladies

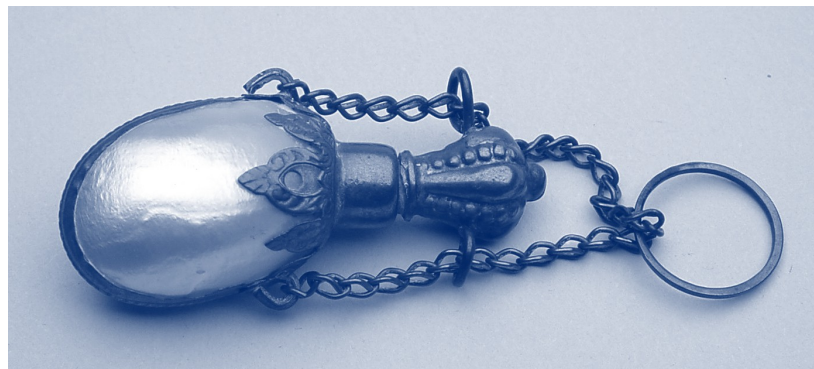
Today, when a woman looks for tips on train travel, the focus is on safety, but the writers often point out the convenience, affordability and the ability to bring more baggage for less money inherent in this mode of travel. In the late 19th and early 20th century, women were also turning to the media for advice on train travel, but then the focus was on comfort and convenience, as well as getting from point “a” to point “b” looking great.

“The one great problem which puzzles and bothers the fair sex when traveling by rail is to secure the same easy comfort enjoyed by their masculine fellow-passenger, and yet not sacrifice their good looks.” The preceding sentence is the first line of an article published in an 1878

newspaper that frequently reads more like a modern parody than vintage advice. The writer proceeds to offer a whole host of cunning strategies for the weary female traveler to overcome the challenges

presented by rail travel. For those who do not follow the writer’s prescription, gloom and doom is predicted: “Our fated friend has washed her face in the minimum of ice water until it looks much like a South Sea Islander’s, red and black in spots and streaks. That woman’s temper is ruined for the day.”

Starting in November, visit the museum to learn more about how the period woman traveler was advised to arrive at her destination ready to “go sight-seeing or pleasure-seeking all at once.” From attractively stored cologne to detachable collars, we will present the items that the well-prepared woman was to pack on this harrowing journey to avoid the fate of her “frowsy” fellow traveler.



Baroque pearl perfume flask.

Interested in Texas’ railroad history? Visit San Jacinto Museum’s online exhibit *Trains to Texas* at <https://sanjacinto-museum.smugmug.com/OnlineExhibits/>

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