

San Jacinto News

OCTOBER 2017

Harvey Dampens Grounds, Not Museum



The park and Monument from Independence Parkway, August 29.

The San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site was extremely fortunate to come through Hurricane Harvey with minimal damage to the park and facilities. As a thank you to the communities that have supported us over the years and in recognition of the impact the storm has had on some of our youngest citizens, the museum is working on plans to use a portion of the funds raised by the Special Evening with Texas History to fund admission for teachers and students to the monument this December. The museum staff is already working with several major local foundations

Special Evening With Texas History

Look forward to an engaging event at the 2017 Special Evening with Texas History, to take place at the San Jacinto Monument on Thursday, November 2. This annual event draws community leaders from the area together for an evening of good food and great company with a chance to celebrate history in a new way at the San Jacinto Museum.

The evening begins at 6:00, when *New York Times* and internationally bestselling author Steve Berry will be on hand to sign copies of his book, *The Lost Order*. Elizabeth and Steve Berry established History Matters, a foundation dedicated to historic preservation. Together they have raised more



Elizabeth and Steve Berry.

than \$1 million for significant historic sites across our nation. Elizabeth is the Executive Director of International Thriller Writers, a trade group, and co-founder of 1001 Dark Nights, an internet marketing company. Steve serves on the Smithsonian Libraries Advisory Board, while

Elizabeth serves on its Education Committee. Steve has 22,000,000 books printed in 51 nations and 40 languages. His books are history-based and well researched. Together they are a potent team advocating the value of history in our lives today.

The evening will include a salute to Medal of Honor Recipient and Texan Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez, who will be represented by his daughter and her family.

For information and ticket reservations, call the museum at 281-479-2421 or email Lynda Ybarra at lybarra@sanjacintomuseum.org.

and funders to ensure that school groups will be able to visit the park later this school year, but we want to provide an opportunity for all school-age children to come and enjoy a day away from it all, free of charge, even if their school is not taking a field trip to San Jacinto. Heroic actions driven by the purpose and values often ascribed to the historic figures

whose portraits grace Museum walls have been playing out on the streets of our cities over the past six weeks. Texas, we have truly shown our best selves to the world.



Flood water covering the entry road provides a resting spot for sea birds visiting the park, Tuesday, August 29, 2017. Photos by Anna Aubry, San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site Office Manager; courtesy TPWD.

Letter from the President

Dear Museum Members,

An interesting facet of history is that it is relevant in different circumstances, at different times and understood in different ways by different people. And yet it is universal.

Houston knows this. It is a city noted for perseverance, courage and optimism. Texas was not founded nor inhabited by those who waited, rested and looked behind, but by those who strove forward toward a better tomorrow. Emerging in 1939 from this nation's deepest depression through programs that put people to work, our museum is a symbol of what can be accomplished with determination in spite of adversity.

With this spirit of perseverance and optimism ingrained into who we are as Texans, we reopened our museum one week after Hurricane Harvey hit our community. Individuals and families with whom I spoke while they visited our museum were happy to find it up and running and were thankful to have such a special place they could bring their families to visit. The museum offers a place to reflection on difficult times through which Texans in the past have endured, survived and even thrived, viewed through the lens of history.

We are also looking forward one month, in a spirit of optimism, to our annual Special Evening with Texas History event on November 2nd, which is critical to funding the programs of the San Jacinto Museum of History. We will be recognizing a legendary figure in U.S. Military history, Medal of Honor recipient Roy P. Benavidez and honoring Steve and Elizabeth Berry, who started the History Matters Foundation. All who attend will once again

experience a wonderful and meaningful event. I feel that moving forward with this celebration of history despite the events that have taken place in our community will be in affirmation of the spirit of Texas as well as our mission; and to Texans, there is something to be said for not letting disasters get in the way of celebrating our history. We plan to use a portion of the revenue realized by the Special Evening to impact our community, funding free admission for students and teachers to the museum; the extent to which we can do so depends on the response we receive from you in supporting the event, so we hope you decide to attend.

As we approach the end of 2017, it is with sadness and regret that we note the passing of two trustees who have served the San Jacinto Museum of History Association with distinction for many years. Mr. Paul G. Bell, Jr. and Governor Mark White contributed to the legacy of Texans serving Texas with honor and commitment. Gervais Bell was on the museum's board for 33 years, serving as chair from 1977 to 1999; Governor White was a trustee for 6 years. I am grateful for their many and varied contributions to the running of the museum, and we will miss their dedication.

With the very warmest of my sincere regards,

Larry Spasic
President, San Jacinto Museum of History

Today's Heroes of San Jacinto New and Renewing Members

Texas Forever Lifetime

Ms. Joan Lyons
Mr. George Peckham

Monument Society

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas R. Kelsey

Museum Circle

Mr. and Mrs. Tom M. Davis, Jr.
Ms. Clare Glassell
Hon. Gene Green
Mr. and Mrs. Ted Marston
Ms. Carolyn W. Payne

Independence Society

Mr. and Mrs. Bolivar C. Andrews
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew M. Fossler
Mr. and Mrs. Michael N. Lamb
Mr. and Mrs. David Marold

Family Freedom Society

Ms. Milissa DeLeon
Mr. and Mrs. John Delome
Mrs. Diane S. Doty
Mrs. Dorothy Knox Houghton
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Mr. and Mrs. Doug Unerfusser
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Weaver
Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie Liggett



Although the days are getting shorter, Texas weather is still warm. Cool off with a drink in one of these double walled tumblers with Texas or San Jacinto and a star on the side. Available for \$11.95 in the museum gift shop, your museum membership will give you a discount.

Historic Park Photos Online

The latest in a series of online exhibits is *San Jacinto Battleground Through Time*, which presents seventy years of images of the battlefield at <https://sanjacinto-museum.smugmug.com/SanJacintoPark/Park-History/>. See how the battlefield changed over time.

Next up will be a look at some of the

World War II posters produced by the Office of War Information Bureau of Graphics to encourage support for the war, focusing on conservation, production, recruiting, home efforts and secrecy. This exhibit will be online in December.



This photo showing the Brigham Monument, circa 1890, was brought home from a veteran's reunion by George Green.

Save the Date

October 1-31, 2017 - Museum artifacts are part of the online exhibit for the Gulf Coast Reads simultaneous reading of *News of the World* by Paulette Jiles. <http://www.gulfcoastreads.org>

October 21, 2017 - In conjunction with Gulf Coast Reads, Lisa Struthers, Library Director of the Herzstein Library, will give a program about early Texas newspapers in the library's collection, the history of newspaper publishing in Texas, and the Library's participation in the Texas Digital Newspaper program; La Porte Branch Library, 600 South Broadway, La Porte, Texas 77571, 10:30 a.m.

November 2, 2017 - Special Evening With Texas History.

February 17, 2018 - Membership Luncheon, Guest Speaker: historian and author Jeffrey Kerr.

March 3, 2018 - 7th Annual San Jacinto Texas Independence Fun Run; Discounted registration begins October 1, at <http://www.active.com/la-porte-tx/running/distance-running-races/7th-annual-san-jacinto-texas-independence-fun-run-2018>.

April 17, 2018 - San Jacinto Day Dinner, Houston Country Club.

April 21, 2018 - Official Commemorative Ceremony of the Battle of San Jacinto.

April 21, 2018 - San Jacinto Festival and Battle Reenactment.



The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Library had a table exhibit at the September 10, 2017, Houston Archives Bazaar. About 200 people attended the event, to learn about archives in the greater Houston area. Photo courtesy Ai-Ha Do.

Veterans Welcomed

The San Jacinto Museum of History will welcome active and retired military personnel free of charge on Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11. Veterans or active duty personnel with a government issued military ID can visit the Observation Deck, the Jesse H. Jones Theatre for Texas Studies for *Texas Forever!! The Battle of San Jacinto*, and the special exhibit *A Destined Conflict: The U.S. - Mexican War*, for free.

Thank You to Recent Donors

Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation
Houston Endowment, Inc.
Strake Foundation

Renew your membership online today at
www.sanjacinto-museum.org/Support_Us/Membership/



The Jesse H. Jones Theatre for Texas Studies closed for a week in September for scheduled repairs, including the removal of all seats, to allow inspection and repair of the raised flooring that provides a clear view of the front of the stage and screen. New seats and technical upgrades will also be installed, thanks to a grant from the Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation.

**San Jacinto
Museum of History
Board of Trustees 2017**

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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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Exhibits Opening This Fall

Two new exhibits will open in the lobby this fall. A collection of items honoring the life and service of Army Master Sergeant Benavidez will be on display in the museum lobby starting in late September. Benavidez was born in Lindenau near Cuero, Texas. His parents died when he was a child, and he and his younger brother were then raised by their Uncle Nicholas and Aunt

Alexandria at El Campo, Texas. He dropped out of school during the seventh grade and enlisted in the Texas National Guard at age seventeen; two years later, he joined the regular army. He would go on to receive the Medal of Honor for his heroism in the Vietnam War. In May 1968, he saved the lives of at least eight men during a daring rescue in the jungles near Loc Ninh, Vietnam, and was critically wounded. Benavidez promptly received the Distinguished Service



Courtesy the Roy P. Benavidez family.

Cross, but President Ronald Reagan awarded him the Medal of Honor in 1981 when the full story of his actions emerged. The artifacts on display include his Medal of Honor Texas license plate, his M1 combat helmet, and a Commemorative Edition GI Joe of Roy P. Benavidez, released in 2001 to honor the soldier.

Why is studying history important? Is it relevant today? What role does myth and legend play in how we remember the past? These and other questions will be reviewed in a freestanding exhibit in the museum lobby. One of the historical figures examined will be the mythical David - or Davy - Crockett. Stories of Crockett circulated early, as exemplified by a series of prints made in London in 1839 titled Sporting Anecdotes, portraying Crockett engaged in tall tale exploits.

DAVID CROCKETT'S FIGHT FOR BEAR-MEAT.

—“The very first thing I knowed, the bear was down among my dogs, and they fighting all around me. I had my big butcher in my belt, and a pair of dressed buckskin breeches on, so I took out my knife and stood, determined, if he should get hold of me to defend myself the best I could. — I stood there for some time, and could now and then see a white dog I had, but the rest of them, and the bear, which were dark coloured, I couldn't see at all, it was so miserable dark; and I could only tell the biting end of him by the hollering of my dogs.” — Scenes with Uncle Sam? SPORTING REVIEW, 1839.

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Association**
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La Porte, TX 77571-9585

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