

San Jacinto News

APRIL 2017

Lineup of April Events Celebrates San Jacinto

April brings a series of events in honor of the April 21, 1836, battle that won Texas its independence. Attend one or all of these events; more information is available at www.sanjacinto-museum.org or by calling 281.479.2421.



WHO: Dr. Paul Spellman. Proud lovers of their Texas heritage.
WHAT: San Jacinto Dinner.
WHERE: Houston Country Club.
WHY: Learn something new about Texas history. Enjoy the company of friends. Support history programming and education at the San Jacinto Museum.
WHEN: April 18 at 6:30.
FYI: Reservations required.



WHO: Judge Ed Emmett. Ron Stone Jr. Sons and Daughters of the Republic of Texas. San Jacinto Descendants. Texas Army. Guests.
WHAT: Commemoration of the 181st anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto.
WHERE: Northeast steps of the San Jacinto Monument.
WHY: To honor those whose service at the Battle of San Jacinto laid the foundation for freedom.
WHEN: April 21 at 11:00.
FYI: Held inside if raining.



WHO: Reenactors. Entertainers. Cultural exhibitors. Food and other vendors. Crafters. Kids. Adults.
WHAT: San Jacinto Day Festival and Battle Reenactment.
WHERE: San Jacinto Battleground.
WHY: A full day of fun and learning, with crafts and games, not-so-wild animals, singing and dancing, food and cannon fire, highlighted by the reenactment of the Battle of San Jacinto at 3:00. Free admission.
WHEN: April 22 from 10:00 to 6:00.
FYI: Improved parking and shuttle buses.

Meritorious Service Rewarded

Throughout modern history, humankind has created awards and bestowed honors on those who have provided meritorious service. Honors have been given to those who served a greater good in military or civilian life and to recognize the sacrifice made by the people who supported them. Medals, certificates, monetary awards and ceremonial items are

used to award good service and, as many of these items are precious to those who receive them, they are often handed down from generation to generation to memorialize the distinguished service of an ancestor. Frequently these artifacts make their way into museums so that the sacrifice and service can never be forgotten.

The San Jacinto Museum is proud to

share a number of these items in an exhibit in the lobby this spring. A decorative sword awarded for military service, a military promotion signed by Abraham Lincoln, a medal honoring all mothers whose sons served in World War I in Houston and a decorative hat given to a man who helped settle a Native American border dispute are just a few of the items on display.

Letter from the President

Dear Museum Members,

As the leader of an educational institution, I often field questions, especially from students who are studying the Texas Revolution. Although few questions about history are ever simple, those who ask deserve a focused and thoughtful response. The question I recently received was this: "Why is the Alamo important?"

The Alamo, or Mission San Antonio de Valero, is important to many people for a wide range of reasons, thanks to its long and storied history. San Antonio de Béxar was an early outpost on the northern frontier of territory claimed by Spain in the New World. Spain wanted to establish its control over the people and resources on that frontier. From the Catholic Church's point of view, that meant converting the inhabitants and spreading the faith. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, the Alamo served as a mission to the native peoples, a small but important presidio, a barracks, a parish church, and a gathering place for the community.

In the 1830s, the centralist-federalist conflict within the Mexican government gradually spread to the northern Mexican states. As it became clear following revolts in Zacatecas and the Yucatán that President Antonio López de Santa Anna was determined to quash dissent, colonists in Coahuila y Tejas came to realize that their preference for a federalist-style government required them to oppose Santa Anna.

When people think of the Alamo, most contemplate the siege occurring from February 23rd to March 6th of 1836 beginning with the arrival of the Mexican Army and General Santa Anna. Tejas had no standing army, but many who heard the calls of the ad interim government formed resistance groups. Some of those who wanted to fight for the independence of Texas went to the only place resembling a fortress near San Antonio, the former mission. They were caught off guard by how quickly General

Santa Anna arrived. The Texian settlers, Tejanos, and newly arrived Americans could have escaped or simply left before and at the beginning of the siege. When ordered to surrender by General Santa Anna, the diverse group that found themselves at the Alamo elected to make a stand; a cannon shot was their reply. As they suffered through the bombardment that followed, they realized that without significant reinforcements the outcome would be their deaths. They then heard the Degüello or "no quarter" of the Mexican buglers and prepared to resist the final onslaught. Their deaths would come to mean something and would serve to inspire the battle cry for freedom, that would ensure liberties for their families and countrymen and a new nation, at San Jacinto.

To fight for liberty against an oppressive regime is noteworthy, and in the case of the Alamo the presence of several remarkable individuals made the news value of the event high. The principled stand in spite of personal sacrifice is an ideal that has generally been admired throughout history. Inspiration to act on principle against self-interest has a universal appeal that is needed to elevate our sometimes routine existence.

Although the history of the Alamo did not end in March of 1836, it was the events of that period that have made its story an inspiration to many. Teaching the story of the Alamo to a history class, taking visitors to the site, or sharing the story with the next generation are ways to pass that inspiration on to others.



Larry Spasic
President, San Jacinto Museum of History

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Members who attended the Membership Luncheon on February 18 enjoyed the insight into archives past, present, and future, brought by Dr. Laura Lyons McLemore.

Fun Run/Walk



Perfect weather favored the March 4th San Jacinto Texas Independence Fun Run/Walk, with light clouds keeping athletes from becoming too hot while following the 5K and 10K courses that led from the Monument through the park. The 1K kids' run had

more runners than in the past, circling the Monument.

"We appreciate all the sponsors who supported the event financially and also the eight sponsors who also sent athletes," said Carolyn Campbell, who organized the event. "We look forward to seeing many return to next year's race on March 3, 2018." Over 500 people participated, including students from three schools; volunteers from Sam Rayburn H.S. JROTC were extremely helpful.

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Manuscript Collection Donated

Thanks to the Pioneer Memorial Log House Museum and the San Jacinto Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the Fannie C. Little Papers and several publications have been donated to the Albert and Ethel Herzstein Library. Fannie C. Slaughter married David Little in 1891; her papers record ranching life in Frio County from 1864 through 1937, and are a good resource on land grants and land transfers. "We anticipate that this collection will help researchers looking at the history of Texas ranching," said Lisa Struthers, Library Director. "We appreciate that the Pioneer Memorial Log House Museum offered this collection to allow it to be used."

Museum Invites Military and Families

This summer, the San Jacinto Museum of History is again participating in the Blue Star Museums program, which provides free admission to all active duty military personnel, including National Guard and Reserve, U.S. Public Health Service and NOAA Commissioned Corps, and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day, to over 2000 museums. If you have family or friends in the military who are traveling across Texas this summer, invite them to visit San Jacinto.

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The San Jacinto Museum of History
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and revisualize the early history of Texas.

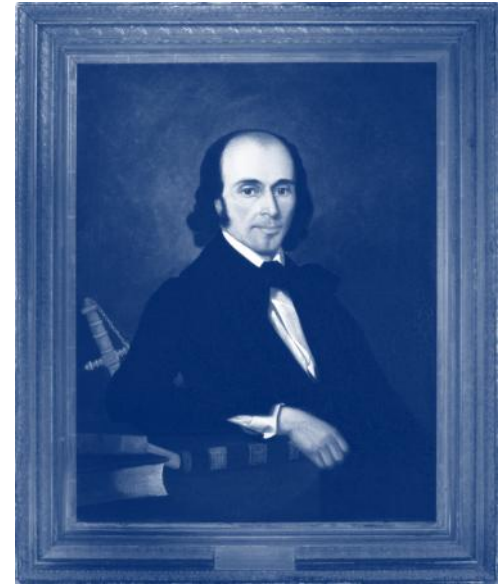
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T. J. Chambers and Chambers County

What is in a name? Anyone who drives through Texas can tell you that the streets, lakes, towns, parks, buildings and counties are often named after the men and women who have made their mark in the Lone Star State. One such individual, Thomas Jefferson Chambers for whom Chambers County was named, was a prominent lawyer, surveyor, judge, soldier and land baron. He had an entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to succeed that was frequently found in those who traveled west in the nineteenth century; however, his ability to translate this drive into profits and awards was often less than successful. Some considered him a good businessman while others felt he was at best unlucky and at worst unscrupulous.

After the Texas Revolution, he settled with his family on the east bank of Trinity Bay, naming the town Chambersia (now Anahuac) and building a house called Chambersea. San Jacinto has many artifacts and documents from the life of this

remarkable man and what better place to use them to tell his story than at the museum's exhibit cases at the Chamber's County Safety rest stops on Interstate 10 in Hankamer, less than ten miles from where Chambers made his home. As you travel through Chambers County this summer, stop by and take a look.



This painting of Thomas Jefferson Chambers made by Thomas Flintoff in 1842 hung at Chambers's home in Anahuac. The painting was damaged by bullets when Chambers was assassinated.

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