



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The decision was made to return to face-to-face Chapter meetings beginning with our June 26, 2021 meeting. I am excited to return to a measure of normalcy with an increasingly vaccinated population making this possible. Getting back out into the public to meet people and share our common lineage is exciting. I look forward to "seeing" you in the near future at an upcoming event or Chapter meeting.

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The Honor Ring

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Fact or Fiction: The Lady in Blue

Of all the tales of lost treasure, ghosts, inexplicable lights, apparitions, spirit horses, unsolved murders and disappearances across the Southwest, the legend of María Jesus de Ágreda - the fabled "Lady in Blue" or "Blue Nun" - surely ranks among the most strange and mysterious of them all. A Spanish nun who, physically, never left her convent in her country's province of Soria, she nevertheless purportedly traveled by spirit - a phenomenon called "bi-location" or "teleportation" - by the Church to minister to Indians in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. María, born on April 2, 1602 in Spain would later enter the Sisters of Teresa's Convent of Saint Ann at the nearby city of Tarazona to begin her service to the Church.

She was elevated to the position of abbess of the convent in 1627, at the age of 25, an appointment that required dispensation by



The "Lady in Blue" or "Blue Nun" is an enduring legend throughout Texas and the Southwest United States. A tale as big as Texas!

Pope Urban VIII because of her youth. She became Señora María Jesus de Ágreda. Señora María died at her convent on May 24,

1665, at the age of 63. In 1690, a quarter of a century after Señora María's death, a Tejas Indian chief in eastern Texas asked Damian Manzanet, a Franciscan missionary, for a piece of blue baize in which to bury his mother. He specified blue, the missionary said, "because in times past [the Tejas Indians] had been visited frequently by a very beautiful woman, who used to come down from the heights, dressed in blue garments, and they wished to be like that woman." Did the Lady in Blue really accomplish these great miracles? The King of Spain, Phillip II, for one, believed so. He exchanged some 600 letters with María Ágreda. And, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church came to believe it after years of exhaustive research.

USS Texas: The End of World War I

On November 21, 1918 at 10:00 am, the ships of Battleship Division Nine joined the rest of the Grand Fleet to witness Operation ZZ, the surrender of the German fleet at the Firth of Forth on the coast of Scotland. The Grand Fleet, composed of 370 ships and 90,000 men,

formed two columns through which the defeated German ships passed. The guns of every ship in the Grand Fleet were trained on the passing German fleet in the event they tried a break out. The five United States battleships, which formed Battleship Division Nine, were positioned in the

order of the *USS New York*, *USS Texas*, *USS Arkansas*, *USS Wyoming*, and *USS Florida*. An excellent historical account of the *USS Texas* is available via [YouTube](#) and details much of the preceding German surrender as well as other exploits of the *USS Texas* during her World War I service.



Participate to the extent of your capability and availability, but participate.

"...rumor quickly spread that Santa Anna allowed his soldiers to sack the city and commit crimes against the inhabitants and their property."

The End of the 1st Federalist Republic of Mexico, Dr. Richard Bruce Winders, June 8, 2016

Join Us for these Upcoming Events

As we previously said, any schedule we propose may incur significant changes due to external forces beyond our control. With the reduced COVID-19 restrictions and increased vaccination rates, our schedules are starting to return to something we recognize. We are planning a number of near-term outings both at San Jacinto as well as here in Katy. In addition, we finally get to bring our Come and Take It cannon replica to some events, so bone up on your knowledge

about this cannon as we expect to get many questions from the public. For Chapter meetings, we will attempt to have an online option available.

April 17, 2021: San Jacinto Day Festival, LaPorte, Texas

April 21, 2021: San Jacinto Day ceremony, LaPorte, Texas

May 15, 2021: Katy ISD Folklife Festival, Katy, Texas

June 26, 2021: June Chapter Meeting, Katy, Texas

July 17, 2021: July Chapter

Meeting, Katy, Texas

July 31, 2021: SRT National Meeting, San Antonio, Texas

September 18, 2021: Texian Navy Day, TBD

October TBD, 2021: City of Katy Rice Festival

November TBD, 2021: Father of Texas Celebration, San Felipe de Austin

November TBD, 2021: November Chapter Meeting

December 11, 2021: Chapter Holiday Gathering

Zacatecas, a Predecessor to The Alamo

In September 1810, Father Miguel Hidalgo raised the standard of revolt in nearby Guanajuato. For several months, Father Hidalgo's rebel forces occupied Zacatecas and other areas of Mexico. However, eventually Royalist forces routed the insurgents and captured Father Hidalgo, who was executed on July 31, 1811 by a firing squad. The war for



The State of Zacatecas had rebelled previous to 1835 and had many silver mines.

independence continued for ten more years before the Spanish Empire was finally forced to give up its prized colony at the Treaty of Cordoba on August 24, 1821. Two years later, on July 12, 1823, Zacatecas declared itself an independent state within the Mexican Republic.

The Rebellion in Zacatecas of 1835 was part of the Mexican

An Inconspicuous Tejano

When most think of critical Tejano contributors to the Texas saga, names such as Navarro, de Zavala, and Seguin typically float to the surface. However, José Francisco Ruiz, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, does not. The recent book *Tejano Patriot: The Revolutionary Life of*

José Francisco Ruiz, 1783-1840 by Art Martínez de Vara attempts to address these shortcomings by bringing to light the significant contributions to Texas by Ruiz. As noted by Jesus F. de la Teja, Ruiz's revolutionary activities did not just take place in 1835-1836 with regard to Texas independence

from Mexico, but in 1812-1821 with regard to Texas and Mexican independence from Spain. Also, he was not a proponent of Texas annexation by the United States. The patriotic beliefs of José Francisco Ruiz focused on Texas first and all other loyalties second. I invite you to read more about him!

Zacatecas, a Predecessor to The Alamo, *Cont'd*

Federalist War between Mexican centralists and federalists during the first half of the nineteenth century during the administration of Antonio López de Santa Anna.

The Governor of Zacatecas, Francisco García Salinas, led an army of about four thousand men against the government. His troops met Santa Anna on the battlefield and were defeated on May 11, 1835.

In response to this rebellion and direct challenge to his powers, Santa Anna allowed his soldiers to



General Antonio López de Santa Anna as he was portrayed in 1835-1836 as the “Napoleon of the West”

rape and pillage the city of Zacatecas for two days to teach the rest of the country a lesson.

The people of Texas were keenly aware of this treatment of their fellow Mexican State and took to arms to prepare for their own revolution. After the fall of The Alamo, the colonists of Texas were intent to not leave anything for the imposing Mexican forces so they burned all as they passed. Santa Anna's treatment of the colonist in Texas mirrored that of the preceding year's ransacking of Zacatecas.

My “Cuz” Sam Houston

Each and every member of The Sons of the Republic of Texas are proud of their ancestors and we all put them upon a pedestal of almost superhuman qualities, but three separate members of one Chapter having the same relation to Texas' Sam Houston is remarkable. Our current Chaplain, Bobby R. Smith, member Joe Moya Jr., and your Chapter President Bart Dawson all

call Sam Houston their second cousin (6X removed). Both Bobby and Joe have the same qualifying ancestor coming from the Paxton line wherein Elizabeth Paxton was Sam's mother. In 1837, their qualifying ancestor arrived in San Augustine, Texas and eventually settled around San Antonio, Texas. Bart Dawson is a second cousin (6X removed) to Sam by being a direct

descendant of Sam Houston's great grandparents daughter Isabella Houston. Bart's qualifying ancestor via Isabella settled in Rusk County in East Texas in 1840. Soon after joining the SRT, Sam Houston IV called Bart to discuss this relationship and he was ecstatic that he had another family member in Katy! Genealogy can turn up the darndest things once you start digging into it!

“I’m so excited to learn of a new relative here in Katy!”

Past President General, Sam Houston IV to Bart Dawson December 4, 2016

The Lamar Flag Ceremony, 28 Years and Counting

Dennis Giuffré, past Chapter President and current Chapter Historian has long held this ceremony each Texas Independence Day to honor the second President of the Republic of Texas, Mirabeau B. Lamar. More importantly, for Dennis, this event is a family affair as his wife Mary, his son Alex, and now his brother, Rick (who is our Chapter's Second Vice President) were all in

attendance on March 2, 2021. The weather was beautiful and Lamar's monument was still sparkling white, just as clean as it was two years ago when we refurbished it. Dennis has each attendee read a portion of a detailed biography of President Lamar, and I suspect Dennis included on purpose some words that present a pronunciation challenge to most people just to see how bad

we butchered those words. I jest in my critique obviously! 2021 marked the 28th consecutive year this event was held and it is a cornerstone of our Chapter events and moreover, a monument to Dennis' dedication to serving our Chapter and preserving the Texas History we all cherish.



SRT members in attendance at the Lamar Flag Ceremony.



The Sam Houston Chapter #38

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**“Honoring your Ancestors,
remembering your past”**

The **PURPOSE** of the SRT shall be to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved the independence of Texas, set the young Republic upon its high course among the nations of the world, and finally secured its admission as a state of the United States of America.

The Sons of the Republic of Texas, Inc. (“SRT”) consists of members who are direct lineal descendants of those that settled the Republic of Texas prior to February 19, 1846, when Texas merged with the United States as the 28th state.

The Sam Houston Chapter was formed in 1987 in Katy, TX and holds regular meetings at Texas Tradition restaurant in Katy.

Dawn at The Alamo 2021

Will there be a Dawn at The Alamo ceremony this year...? Yes! No! Yes! No! Yes! Well, the final answer was Yes, but it would be a subdued event due to COVID-19 protocols.

Last year’s Dawn at The Alamo event was the first one your Chapter President had ever attended and I was emotionally moved by the event and what it truly represented. In addition, we never imagined that event would be the last Texas History event we would attend, participate in, or support for another twelve months due to the pandemic. Our world changed irrevocably the very next week branding the #2020 phrase into our lexicon forevermore.

March 6, 2021 began early with the various SRT groups meeting in the lobby of The Menger Hotel shortly

after 5:00 am, walking our wreaths over to The Alamo, and staging them and ourselves in preparation for the ceremony. A cool breeze was prevalent that morning, so much so that several wreaths blew over. Our new First Vice President, Jim Muller, attended his first Dawn at The Alamo and was excited to be present to



Chapter President Bart Dawson, First Vice President Jim Muller, and the Chapter’s wreath.

witness this event firsthand. We also want to thank our immediate past Chapter President, Ben Warren IV, for ordering our wreath and having it delivered to us at The Menger. It was the most beautiful wreath there as it was heavily adorned with flowers and cited our Chapter from Katy.

All of the usual suspects were present, the Crockett descendants, Bowie descendants, Esparza descendants, and a host of other organizations. Few things in my experience can compete with the sunlight breaking over The Alamo’s campanulate and realizing what transpired around you 185 years ago at that exact time. Imagining the final thoughts of an Alamo defender or a Mexican soldier sent shivers down my back, but knowing the defenders gave their lives for a larger cause was consoling.