



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In late 2023 into 2024, we had to take a break from the newsletter due to unforeseen circumstances, but we are back. This issue attempts to catch you up on the past year+ adventures of our Chapter. We will return to our normal quarterly newsletter schedule in 2025, so I encourage you to review the upcoming events calendar inside and join us at any of the many events supporting Texas history.

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The Honor Ring

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President Anson Jones

The weather in mid-February can be tricky in Houston, Texas! It could be 30 °F or 85 °F. This past year, we were blessed with perfect weather with which to host our annual Anson Jones ceremony to celebrate him as the fourth and final President of the Republic of Texas as well as his moniker of the "Architect of Annexation." Upon his arrival in Texas in 1832, Jones had no designs on politics rather he was focused on establishing his medical practice in Brazoria. However, that changed in 1835 when he began to speak out about the tension between Mexico and Texas. With this in mind, he attended the Consultation in Columbia (later rescheduled to occur at San Felipe de Austin) where he offered his support for

a Declaration of Independence from Mexico. Anson Jones served as a surgeon at the 1836 Battle of San Jacinto, but returned



Sam Houston Chapter members from L to R: Bart Dawson, Rick Giuffré, Kameron Searle, Phil Whitley, Mark Morgan, Patrick Burrell, Jim Muller, and Mark Landt.

to his medical practice in Brazoria following the Texas Revolution. In 1838, Sam Houston appointed Anson Jones as the Re-

public's diplomatic minister to the United States with the primary intent to seek the United State's annexation of Texas. Although this effort failed at that time, his political life was far from over. In September of 1844, Anson Jones was elected the fourth President of the Republic of Texas. His time in office was precarious with many missteps politically, while his choice to spend much of his presidency at his home on Barrington Farms caused further problems. On February 19, 1846, his final act as President was to preside over the transfer of power as Texas had finally been annexed by the United States. That day, Jones transferred power to Governor James Pinckney Henderson and took down the Texas flag.

Sam Houston at Fort Towson

Before Sam Houston became the famous Texan he was, his life was tumultuous to say the least. An ardent follower of President Andrew Jackson, Sam would be intertwined with Jackson until Jackson's death. After Sam's personal scandal during his time as Governor of Tennessee, he em-

barked on a period in his life where he settled with the Cherokee Indians. His love for the Cherokee resulted in his appointment as an Indian agent. During this time, Sam visited Fort Towson located in today's southeast Oklahoma. Fort Towson had a sad story associated with it as it

was the terminus for the Indian relocation decisions of the late 1820s known as the *Trail of Tears*. Sam would procure goods and food for the Cherokee with Fort Towson being a key location for these services. [Fort Towson](#) is set in the beautiful Ouachita Mountains of Oklahoma.



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

“Thank you all for making the trip to send off the USS San Jacinto properly, and we look forward to hosting you all!”
LTJG Eann Aquino, USS San Jacinto DECOM Committee,
September 6, 2023

Join Us for these Upcoming Events

Many events lie ahead of us, so join us when you can.

January 18, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

January 24, 2025: Lamar Day, Richmond, TX

February 15, 2025: Katy ISD FFA Livestock Show & Rodeo Parade, Katy, TX

February 15, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

February 19, 2025: Anson Jones Ceremony, Houston, TX

March 2, 2025: Lamar Flag

Ceremony, Richmond, TX

March 2, 2025: Texas Independence Day, WOTB, TX

March 6, 2025: Dawn at The Alamo, San Antonio, TX

March 28-29, 2025: National Meeting, College Station, TX

April 21, 2025: San Jacinto Day, LaPorte, TX

May 17, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

June 21, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

July 19, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

September 20, 2025: Texian Navy Day, LaPorte, TX

October 18, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

November 15, 2025: Chapter Meeting, Katy, TX

December 13, 2025: Chapter Holiday Gathering, Katy, TX

We will update this calendar as time goes on and new events are announced.

Fair Winds and Following Seas to USS San Jacinto

After approximately 30 years of service to the United States Navy, the USS San Jacinto (CG-56) was officially decommissioned on September 15, 2023 in Norfolk, Virginia.

This was the third U.S. Navy ship to carry the name USS San Jacinto as she was christened in 1990.

Shortly after the ship joined active duty, then Chapter Pres-



Sailors standing at attention during the USS San Jacinto Decommissioning ceremony.

ident Walter Nass began the USS San Jacinto Enlisted Sailor Award Program that our Chapter supported for 30 years. During the early years of this program, the ship would port in Houston and the ceremony was held onboard the ship with tours and all the fanfare of visiting VIPs.

As time marched on, the ship's availability to port in Houston

Texas Family Land Heritage Award

The Texas Department of Agriculture administers an extremely select program called the Texas Family Land Heritage Award. This award is given to qualifying ranches in Texas that were active ranches and remained in the same family for 100, 150, and 200+ consecutive years. The Stuart

Ranch in Foster, Texas, between Katy and Richmond, was passed down across time to the descendants of John Foster who received a land grant from Stephen F. Austin of over 12,000 acres in July of 1824 in what is today's Fort Bend County. For those counting, that was 12 years before Texas

became an independent Republic of Texas! [Jess Stuart and his family](#), the current custodians of the ranch, accepted this award with pride and humility. Jess is a great friend to the Sam Houston Chapter and supports our efforts in and around the Katy and Fort Bend County areas.

Fair Winds and Following Seas to USS San Jacinto, Cont'd

became less and less; therefore, we eventually transitioned the selection and presentation of the award to a remote process led by the ship's Commanding Officer and Command Master Chief. In addition, we also transitioned to giving two awards, one for a winner and one for a runner-up. The lengthy list of winners over time can be seen via this link.

As with many non-profit organizations, funding can be an issue and ours was no different. At times, funds were scarce for this award



Jim Muller and Patrick Burell receiving a Texas Flag from LCDR Rachel Blanco which was in the ship's Ward Room.

but Chapter President Bobby R. Smith always stepped in to make sure the program was funded. Current Chapter President Jim Muller and Historian Patrick Burell attended the decommissioning ceremony to represent The Sons of the Republic of Texas. Both were given front row seats alongside Admirals and other dignitaries with the Commanding Officer acknowledging our contributions during his speech. This program gave back to a group of young sailors away from home, fighting for our freedoms.

A New Beginning with the Katy ISD NJROTC

As noted above, our 30 years program with the USS San Jacinto came to a close in 2023. However, our Chapter wanted to continue our tradition of giving, so we transitioned to a new program involving a senior from the Katy ISD Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) located at Katy's Mayde Creek High School.

This past April 25, 2024, at the

NJROTC's Change of Command & Award Ceremony, the Sam Houston Chapter presented our newly christened *Bobby R. Smith USS San Jacinto Scholarship* to Cadet Michael C. Todd. Cadet Todd exemplified the Navy's core values of honor, courage, and commitment during his two years in the NJROTC Program. Jim Muller, Patrick Burell, Rick Giuffré, and Bart Dawson

attended the ceremony to present Cadet Todd with the award and monetary gift.

Cadet Todd planned to attend the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in New York to further pursue his academic career as well as his officer candidacy via the Academy's ROTC Program. This scholarship will be given annually to a qualifying NJROTC cadet within Katy ISD.

"We thank you for the support and your ability to provide a much needed scholarship to one of our graduating seniors that has displayed teamwork, leadership, and the Core Values of our Program."

**Katy ISD NJROTC,
Naval Science
Instructor, Lucas
Rodrigues (1stSgt Ret)**

Texas Legation Marker in London

No matter where you are at, Texas History remains at the core of every Son! Our Dennis Giuffré was no different. On a trip this past summer to London in the United Kingdom, Dennis made a stop at the historical marker noting the location of the Texas Legation. This was where the minister from the Republic of Texas to the Court of St. James lived from 1843-1845.

The Texas Legation in London was located in Pickering Place, an alley off the east side of St. James's Street near St. James's Palace in a building that also housed Berry Bros. & Rudd, a prestigious wine merchants' firm that has been at that site since 1698. The plaque was erected in 1963. Anglo-Texan Society member Alfred Bossom led the effort to erect the plaque and

the honor of its unveiling went to then-Governor Price Daniel.

In addition to London, the Republic of Texas also maintained Legation residences in both Paris, France and Washington D.C. This should be on every Texan's bucket list!



Sir Knight Dennis Giuffré, KSJ at the Texas Legation in London



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 the Texas Tradition restaurant in Katy.

Cleaning the Thomas J. Rusk Monument

August in East Texas is HOT & HUMID! However, a large group of The Sons of the Republic of Texas came together on August 3, 2024 in Nacogdoches, “The oldest town in Texas,” to clean the gravesite monument of a Texas giant, Thomas J. Rusk. He was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery along with a number of other Texas giants such as Adolphus Sterne and Haden Edwards.

Chapter members drove in from Katy, Richmond, Dallas, and Lufkin to join the local Nacogdoches Chapter for this effort. The monument had never been cleaned or at least not for a long time, and had substantial mold and mildew built up on all sides. The monument was a tall, 27 foot tall obelisk, which made reaching the top a challenge.

This project coincided with an effort

by Treasurer General Kenneth Raney to jump start the dormant Adolphus Sterne Chapter in Nacogdoches and reinvigorate The Sons of the Republic of Texas activities across East Texas or better yet, “*behind the pine curtain.*”

While the main purpose of this event was to clean the monument, the Sam Houston and Mirabeau B. Lamar



Members from Chapters in Nacogdoches, Dallas, Katy, Lufkin, and Richmond participated.

Chapters, who had significant experience in cleaning other monuments, offered to show other groups how to do the same, and build their own local projects.

The City of Nacogdoches had to approve our activity and even attended the cleaning event where we made friends with the local cemetery supervisor and demonstrated our expertise and commitment to doing such activities safely and with respect. This project laid the foundation for the local Chapter to build on to increase membership, but also to give them a base activity to do as a group.

Special thanks to Piney Woods District Representative Larry Lucas and Lufkin Chapter member Jordan Oliver for providing local support for this activity and herding the cats!