

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

# THE MEDALLION

SPRING 2013



## Entering East Texas

Experience the State's  
Historic Portal in San Augustine  
and Nacogdoches





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Entrance to the 1859 Old University Building in Nacogdoches. Photo by Andy Rhodes.

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**FAST FACTS**

These numbers show the significant economic impact  
of courthouse preservation projects in Texas since 1999.



JOBS CREATED



MILLION  
IN INCOME  
GENERATED



MILLION IN  
STATE TAXES  
GENERATED



MILLION IN  
LOCAL TAXES  
GENERATED



More than a century has passed since Richard Ellis first traveled west across coastal swamps and rolling plains to make his home in Texas. After being unanimously elected president of the Texas constitutional convention, Ellis played a leading role in the state's struggle for independence from Mexico. In 1836, Ellis formally signed the Texas Declaration of Independence and went on to serve in the Republic of Texas legislature. Ellis County, Texas, in my home district, is named in his honor.

As a member of the Texas House of Representatives, I am inspired by the legacy of the founding fathers of this great state. Much has changed since the days of Richard Ellis. Waxahachie, a county seat in my home district, comes from an Indian word meaning "cow." Texas has evolved from a state dependent on the cattle industry and agriculture to one leading the nation in energy and technology. Despite these changes, Texans have never lost their pioneering and independent spirit.

Today, a statue of Richard Ellis at the Ellis County Courthouse reminds me of the political heroes who shaped early Texas history. The Ellis County Courthouse, as one of the grandest old courthouses in the Southwest, is an example of how courthouses lend character to the town squares of our county seats. I am dedicated to the preservation of our courthouses, and I have worked hard to fund much-needed restorations for Texas' historic centers of justice.

As Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, I have the unique opportunity of overseeing the budget for the state. While crafting an appropriately conservative budget for the coming biennium, we still value the work that is vital to preserving Texas' historic legacy.

I hope you will join me in celebrating the historic monuments Texas has to offer. And I might suggest you begin with the beautiful courthouse in my hometown, Waxahachie.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Pitts". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Jim Pitts, Chairman  
Appropriations Committee—Texas House of Representatives

# Lots of Love

## Historic Texas Courthouses Receiving National Affection, Awareness

By *Andy Rhodes*  
*Managing Editor, The Medallion*

Historic Texas courthouses have been basking in the spotlight this year, allowing these iconic structures to be flattered in a luminous glow. Dozens of distinctive courthouses have been highlighted in national and statewide awareness campaigns, bringing needed attention to their significance in Texas history and continuing need for preservation.

The activity swelled in February, with countless Texans showing support and appreciation during a month-long “I Love Texas Courthouses” campaign, developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in conjunction with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and Preservation Texas.

Appropriately, on Valentine’s Day, U.S. Congressman Ted Poe (R-Humble) expressed his love for Texas courthouses in the official record of the U.S. House of Representatives.

A former criminal court judge from Houston, Poe states, “As a judge, I traveled to other counties to try cases. Along the way, I began to photograph Texas’ historic courthouses. I was drawn to their impressive and varied architecture. Built with bricks, stone, and stained glass, some have clock towers; others have domes. Each is unique. I like the Renaissance Revival style of the Anderson County Courthouse and the Romanesque Revival style of Fayette County Courthouse in La Grange.

“Along the way, I learned that other Texas officials shared my love and

admiration for our state treasures,” Poe says, adding that in 1998, “my friend and then-governor George W. Bush, together with the Texas Historical Commission, established the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.”

Throughout February, preservation leaders invited local courthouse supporters to show their love for these significant structures through online photo and story sharing, Valentine heart-making, and a group “love letter.”



The “I Love Texas Courthouses” campaign was unveiled at the Comal County Courthouse rededication ceremony in New Braunfels.

The campaign and partnership was spearheaded by the National Trust, which named Texas historic courthouses to its list of America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 1998 and again in 2012. The initial listing spurred the creation of the THC’s Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program, which has awarded \$247 million to more than 80 counties for the preservation of

their county courthouses. The program has served as an important economic engine for Texas, with courthouse restorations generating nearly 10,000 jobs, more than \$22 million in state taxes, and an additional \$21 million in local taxes.

“Recognition for this award-winning program has gone all the way to the White House, where it earned a Preserve America Presidential Award in 2008,” said THC Chairman Matt Kreisle. “All counties participating in this program should be very proud of their efforts to help preserve the real places of Texas.”

The National Trust also named Texas courthouses a National Treasure, signifying their national importance and the organization’s sustained involvement in their protection. According to the National

Trust, National Treasures are irreplaceable, critically threatened places where the organization is making a deep commitment. From historic buildings to cultural landscapes, National Treasures are “unique, movement-defining places of action” that galvanize support and spark greater understanding of how preservation contributes to vibrant communities.

“Dating from the 1860s to the 1950s, Texas courthouses are symbols of a county’s wealth, commerce, geography, and a great source of community pride and identity,” said James Lindberg, field director of the National Trust. “We take their preservation very seriously. Yet we hope this campaign has helped bring to light, in a fun way, just how much these courthouses mean to Texas.”

The successful “I Love Texas Courthouses” campaign was unveiled during the rededication ceremony of New Braunfels’ newly restored Comal County Courthouse in January of this year. Its stunning restoration was made possible





The "I Love Texas Courthouses" campaign visited Milam County (above) and Williamson County (below).

by more than \$3.4 million in grant funds from the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

Construction began on the project in November 2010 to return the 1898 courthouse to its former glory. The building was designed by renowned Texas courthouse architect J. Riely Gordon, and constructed of native Texas limestone in the Romanesque Revival style.

The interior spaces are arranged in a Greek-cross plan with a central stairwell to facilitate natural ventilation through the courthouse tower. Entrance porches are supported by polished Moorish-inspired columns of pink granite, topped with carved detail.

Prior to construction, several artifacts were discovered in the courthouse basement, which helped confirm the courthouse's original appearance, including an ornate cast iron vault doorway and original casement window sashes. During the restoration, contractors discovered original porch tiles thought to no longer be intact.

"There are few places that can strengthen an entire community, but

a restored cherished courthouse truly will," says Sharon Fleming, director of the THC's Architecture Division. "We've seen it happen throughout the state, whenever a county joins our program to bring their beloved courthouse back to its original splendor."

Congressman Poe adds, "Budgets are tight all around, but I think these treasures are worth saving. This summer, as you pack up the family and head across our great state, get off the interstates and drive downtown to any Main Street. There you can share a little Texas history with your kids and grandkids. On each Main Street is a Texas treasure."

A few days after the Comal County rededication ceremony, another Texas courthouse had its moment in the spotlight. On January 26, the La Salle County Courthouse was rededicated, following a long-awaited, two-phase restoration made possible with a \$5.75 million grant from the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

One of several restored courthouses dating to the 1930s, the impressive building was designed by noted Texas courthouse architect Henry Phelps. The La Salle County Courthouse is considered his last, most ambitious, and imaginative courthouse design. The



elegant courthouse sits in the center and highest point of Cotulla, facing the historic city square.

The four-story, concrete frame building is constructed of tan brick with use of gilded terra cotta decorative elements, reflecting a transition from the more ornate Art Deco to the Moderne style favored in the 1930s. The gilded spread eagle seen above each entrance is a national symbol, indicating freedom, strength, and prosperity.



The La Salle County Courthouse rededication drew statewide officials, including (center, from left) Rep. Richard Pena Raymond, Sen. Judith Zaffirini, Rep. Tracy King, and the THC's Sharon Fleming.

The project preserved many original historic features, such as the steel windows, terrazzo floors, stone wainscot, and vault doors, while a new system of energy-efficient heat pumps located underground replace former window-mounted air conditioners. Cork and linoleum flooring matches the historic colors and patterns throughout the building.

For more information about the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us) or call the agency's Architecture Division at 512.463.6094. For more information about the National Trust and its commitment to Texas courthouses, visit [www.ilovetexascourthouses.org](http://www.ilovetexascourthouses.org) and [www.PreservationNation.org](http://www.PreservationNation.org). ★



# From Caddos to Cadillacs

## East Texas' El Camino Real Transports Travelers to Bygone Eras

*Text and Photos by Andy Rhodes  
Managing Editor, The Medallion*

A visitor recently stopped at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site on a whim. He wasn't compelled by its Native American heritage, but he figured he'd get some fresh air and see what the site had to offer.

Visitors like this present a welcome challenge to Tony Souther, site manager for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) property 26 miles west of Nacogdoches. Souther strives to determine the individual interests of each visitor, and tailor an experience that will inspire them to share the real story of Caddo Mounds with their friends.

By asking a few general questions, Souther perceived the recent visitor was a "car guy," allowing their discussion

to veer toward vehicles, transportation, and ultimately to the site's connection with El Camino Real de los Tejas, the legendary "Royal Road" that traverses the property.

"By the end, I'd talked to him about trade routes and different vehicular modes of moving commerce throughout the centuries out here. All of a sudden, he was fascinated with our site and its historical connections," Souther recalls. "I've found that the Camino Real is a great multi-leveled topic to share history—it's evolved from a footpath to the Old Spanish Trail to a wagon route to Highway 21.

"His eyes just lit up when I tied it all together: from Caddos to Cadillacs," he adds.



### High Temple Mound

This mound was originally at least three times its current length and reached 35 feet tall. It was the spiritual and political center of the village with buildings for worship or government. Archaeological evidence suggests that periodically, the buildings on top of the temple mound were ceremonially destroyed by fire and then rebuilt on a layer of fresh dirt brought to cover the charred remains.

**Ceremonial Rebirth Through Fire**  
In the Caddo account of creation, the first man and woman brought fire, a tobacco pipe, a drum, and seeds for planting into this world with them. All of these items appear in the ceremonial life of the Caddo, with fire featuring prominently. Along with the ceremonial burning of structures, at least one village structure may have housed a "perpetual fire," tended by the *shini*, or priest, a feature also common to later Caddo groups.

#### The Mound

During the 1940 excavation of the mound, archaeologists unearthed the remains of a very unique structure which they called "the altar" which was approximately 30 feet in diameter. While the exact use of the building remains unknown, its construction indicates that it was a ceremonial or religious altar.





Caddo Mounds is among dozens of fascinating heritage destinations along a 60-mile stretch of Highway 21 in this part of East Texas that transports visitors to bygone eras. Travelers can plan to spend several days exploring this historically dense portion of the THC's Texas Forest Trail Region.

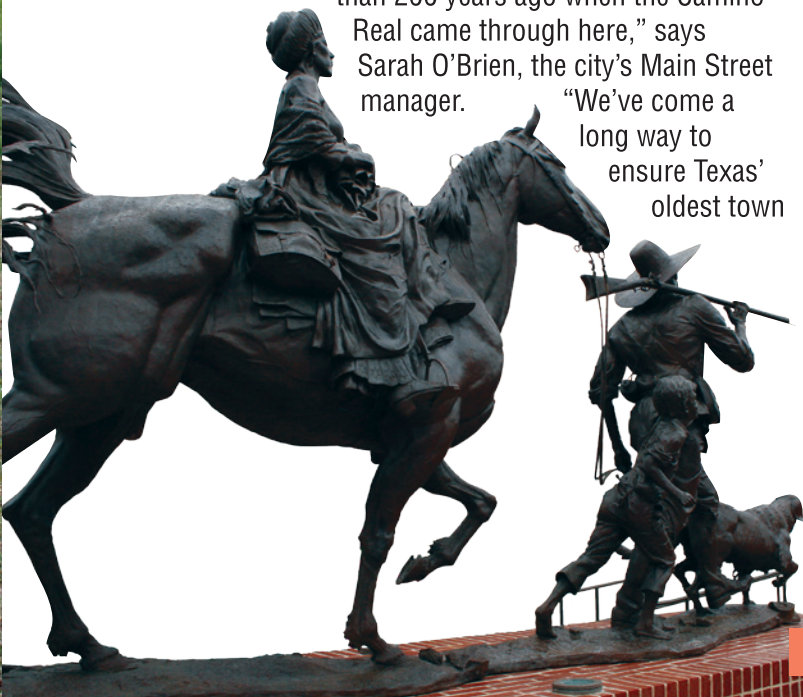
## Nacogdoches

An ideal home base for this historical journey is centrally located Nacogdoches, billed as “the oldest town in Texas.” Nacogdoches thrived as a Native American settlement until 1716, when Spain established a mission at the site. In 1779, Nacogdoches received designation from Spain as a pueblo (village), prompting local historians to deem it Texas’ first official “town.”

Today, Nacogdoches is an active, 15-year participant in the Texas Main Street Program, and its historic downtown district—brimming with charming red-brick streets and late-1800s commercial buildings—is a natural starting point. Travelers should head straight to the downtown square’s Visitors Center, located in the 1918 **Old Nacogdoches Federal Building** (200 E. Main St.). Now housing the Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau, the welcoming facility offers maps, travel guides, helpful staff, and several floors of historical exhibits.

While strolling the square, take time to see **City Hall** (202 E. Pilar St.), featuring a Texas Centennial plaque on the façade noting it as the site of Sam Houston’s first home in Texas. The current building was constructed in 1891, and most notably served as Old Liberty Hotel from 1925–51. It now houses city offices, including staff for the Texas Forest Trail Region and Nacogdoches Main Street programs.

“We think of historic downtown Nacogdoches as a gateway to travelers far and wide, just like it was more than 200 years ago when the Camino Real came through here,” says Sarah O’Brien, the city’s Main Street manager. “We’ve come a long way to ensure Texas’ oldest town



Above: The 1835 Durst-Taylor House is Nacogdoches’ second-oldest structure. Right: the 1897 Charles Hoya Land Office building.



offers a memorable experience, and we’re looking forward to paving a unique future.”

Across the street from City Hall is the **Charles Hoya Land Office** (120 E. Pilar St.). Constructed in 1897 for local surveyor Charles Hoya, this National Register property is known for its corbelled brickwork and as one of the least-altered historic commercial buildings in downtown Nacogdoches.

Two blocks away from the historic town center, **Hotel Fredonia** (200 N. Fredonia St.) represents a different yet significant era of the city’s history. Deemed “as modern as an atomic submarine” when it opened in 1955, the six-story Fredonia offered contemporary architectural style with French Creole accents in its decorative wrought-iron work. The hotel recently received an extensive renovation to its 1950s elegance, and has become a preferred lodging option for Nacogdoches’ heritage travelers.

Just around the corner is the **Durst-Taylor House** (304 North St.), the city’s second-oldest structure still standing on its original site. Built in 1835 on the former adobe homesite of Andres de Acosta, who settled in Nacogdoches in 1779, this National Register property is a notable example of a modest East Texas home during the era of Anglo settlement. The home was later owned by Thomas J.

Opposite, from left: El Camino Real, now represented by Highway 21, traverses Caddo Mounds State Historic Site. A new statue in downtown Nacogdoches depicts the town as “The Gateway” for Texas settlers.



Rusk, one of Texas' first U.S. senators, and was eventually acquired by the city, which removed the electricity and plumbing to accurately depict the pioneer lifestyle.

The 1830 **Sterne-Hoya House** (211 S. Lanana St.), the oldest home in Nacogdoches remaining on its original site, was built for Adolphus Sterne, a prominent leader of the Texas Revolution. The National Register property was repurposed in the 1980s to become a museum representing the two families and their associated time periods. The Sternes (Republic of Texas era) hosted many leading figures of the time, including Sam Houston, David Crockett, and Cherokee Chief Bowles. A tour highlight is the subterranean wine cellar, constructed in 1845 using rock and red dirt from nearby Lanana Creek. The Hoya side of the home (Victorian period) features ornate furnishings, including a music box that occasionally plays without warning, and a "What is it?" table, prompting visitors to discern among a candle mold, earhorn, and school supplies.

A few blocks to the north is the 1914 **Zion Hill Baptist Church** (324 N. Lanana St.), the heart of the surrounding African American community's Zion Hill neighborhood, a National Register district. The church contains a compelling architectural mix of Gothic and Victorian styles, and is currently receiving an interior restoration. The adjacent **Oak Grove Cemetery** is the final resting place for a number of legendary Texans, including four signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

Among Nacogdoches' other many historical highlights are the **Stone Fort Museum** (on the Stephen F. Austin State University campus, 1936 North St.), a 1936 replica of a circa-1790 building that was once a home, trading post, church, jail, and saloon (but never a fort). The **Old University Building** (515 N. Mound St.) is a stately 1859 Greek Revival structure chartered by the Republic of Texas that now serves as a museum with regional artifacts and exhibits. At the northern edge of the city is **Millard's Crossing** (6020 North St.), an eclectic collection of relocated 19th-century buildings assembled by former Congresswoman Lera Millard Thomas, including Recorded Texas Historical Landmarks like the Millard-Lee House (circa 1837) and Burrows-Millard House (1867).

## San Augustine

Just 32 miles to the east, San Augustine has become a burgeoning heritage hotspot in Texas, drawing visitors from across the South. In March of this year, San Augustine was a focal point of the state's preservation community when it hosted First Lady Anita Perry as part of the First Lady's Tour of new Main Street cities.

"History is a defining feature of this town. We were settled in 1832, so a lot of history has moved through



Clockwise from above: San Augustine's Pinto Pony Cookie Factory restaurant; entry to the historic San Augustine county courthouse; San Augustine's 1911 First United Methodist Church.

here," says Tracy Cox, San Augustine's Main Street manager. "People here are so energetic and excited to be part of the Main Street program. We love our heritage, and this is a wonderful way to put it on display for everyone to see."

The centerpiece of the Main Street district is the remarkable 1927 **San Augustine County Courthouse** (100 W. Columbia St.), restored in 2010 through the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. While researching the building's history, architects relied on historic images from Farm Security Administration photographer Russell Lee, who spent several weeks photographing events at the courthouse in 1939.

"Those photos showed all kinds of wonderful details in the district courtroom, like the original wooden chairs and beautiful windows—they'd been covered up for decades and it was just atrocious!" says Betty Oglesbee, chair of the San Augustine Garden Club, a primary organizer for the project's local fundraising efforts. "It's been so nice to have the building restored to its original beauty, and I'm just thrilled that our new Main Street



Oak Grove Cemetery





manager is able to have an office here. It's a wonderful example of the coordinated effort we're making to share and promote our history."

On an adjacent corner of the courthouse square is another appealing Main Street destination: **Pinto Pony Cookie Factory** (102 E. Columbia St.). San Augustine County Judge Samye Johnson opened the business in 2007 with her husband Tom and brother Mike Malone; after a major restoration, it evolved into a popular retail outlet and restaurant. Tom and Samye's daughter Jodi

recently bought the company, and has channeled her entrepreneurial energy into national awareness and ambitious plans for a nearby 107-acre multi-purpose complex.

"San Augustine has been a key component in the success of Pinto Pony—the support we've received from folks around here has been incredible," Jodi Johnson says. "We're looking forward to the excitement of being involved with the Main Street program, and hope our increased visibility will draw even more people to our wonderful community."

While visiting San Augustine, heritage travelers can also explore historical attractions like **Mission Dolores Visitors Center** (701 S. Broadway St.). Located near the former site of Mission Nuestra Senora de los Dolores de los Ais, the center features interactive exhibits about the mission, established by Spain in the 1720s to "civilize" the regional Ais Indians. The mission represented a rare example of peaceful relations among Europeans and Native Americans before its closure in 1773.

The site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and designated a State Archeological Landmark.

San Augustine residents take much pride in their multi-faceted historical sites, including eight historic churches, 16 Texas Centennial markers, 13 historic cemeteries, and nearly two dozen THC historical markers. Among the notable designations are markers commemorating **Sam Houston in San Augustine** (128 E. Columbia St.), the

Gothic-inspired 1911 **First United Methodist Church** (205 S. Liberty St.), and the 1838 **Col. Stephen Blount Home** (503 Columbia St.).

"Our history is generating a lot of enthusiasm, so this is a very exciting time for San Augustine," Cox says. "We're in good company with other Texas cities—we feel like we're on the cusp of wonderfulness!"

To learn about additional heritage tourism destinations in the area, order a free copy of the THC's *Texas Forest Trail Region* travel guide by calling 866.276.6219 or visiting [www.texasimetravel.com](http://www.texasimetravel.com). ★



## CADDO MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE

The THC's Caddo Mounds State Historic Site near Alto is in the midst of an "exciting transitional time," according to Site Manager Tony Souther. Although Caddo Mounds' visitors center is currently undergoing an extensive renovation, the site remains open. The public is welcome to stroll the interpretive trails and visit a temporary visitors center with exhibits about the Caddo Indians' 1,200-year-old temple mounds, burial mound, and village area.

Construction on the facility is expected to continue throughout the year. The updated visitors center will feature state-of-the-art interactive exhibits and enhanced interpretation of the site. Souther also notes that the site's recently acquired 303 additional acres hold a significant portion of the former Caddo village area.

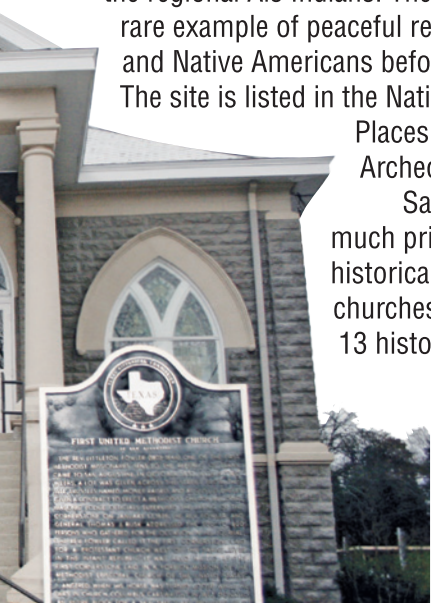
"There's a lot of potential out here," Souther says. "In the meantime, we'll be hard at work on the visitors facility and planning for the new property. This is all shaping up to be an entirely fresh experience for visitors down the road."

1649 State Hwy. 21 West, Alto, TX 75925

Open: Tuesday–Sunday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

936.858.3218

[www.visitcaddomounds.com](http://www.visitcaddomounds.com)



# Descent into Darkness

## THC Assists with Two Historic Shipwreck Investigations in Low-Visibility Waters

By Amy Borgens  
State Marine Archeologist

In the northern Gulf of Mexico’s shallow waters, visibility is often poor at best. But beneath the lightly lapping waves are the remains of a diverse array of historic shipwrecks, some discovered, but most unknown to archeologists, historians, and enthusiasts.

Two recent shipwreck investigations in these offshore areas demonstrate the current and emerging technologies used to “see” shipwrecks in low-visibility waters. These investigations also highlight successful collaborations between federal and state agencies,

private companies, and community interest groups.

In early January 1863, the 210-foot steam warship *USS Hatteras* was stationed off Galveston during the Union bombardment of the city. When the *Hatteras* ventured into the gulf in pursuit of an unknown vessel on

attempt was the first major challenge to U.S. ownership of its sunken military properties. The landmark court case inexorably established the government’s claim on its historic shipwrecks.

*Hatteras* is approximately 20 miles off Galveston, and protection of this shipwreck is largely managed by the U.S. government through the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).

“We’ve worked closely with federal agencies in monitoring this significant archeological site ever since the wreck was discovered,” explains Pat Mercado-Allinger, director of the THC’s Archeology Division.

Renewed interest in *Hatteras* was triggered by an examination of the wreck in 2010 during a BOEM-funded study. Archeologists from Tesla Offshore, Inc. observed changes at the wreck, recognizing the site was more exposed than in the past and evidence of potential looting.

Though diving on historic wrecks in state and federal waters is not typically discouraged, damaging the site or removing artifacts is considered unlawful according to many governmental regulations. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries learned of *Hatteras*’ plight, and spearheaded a new investigation to assess the wreck’s condition.

### DIVING IN

Initial work on *Hatteras* occurred in July 2012, including a baseline



Tom Freeman

A painting titled “The Fatal Chase,” depicting a Civil War naval battle

The Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) marine archeology program has long been involved with efforts to explore the gulf’s rich maritime history, spanning more than 500 years. Evidence of this history remains wrecked on the seafloor, including ships of commerce and exploration, along with vessels of war, privateers, and pirates.

Management and protection of these sites in the gulf is governed by state and federal agencies, based on their unique jurisdictions. Texas’ maritime boundary extends offshore 3 leagues (9 nautical miles, 10.34 miles) with U.S. territorial waters terminating at 12 nautical miles. Federal oversight extends an additional 200 miles in a region categorized as the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

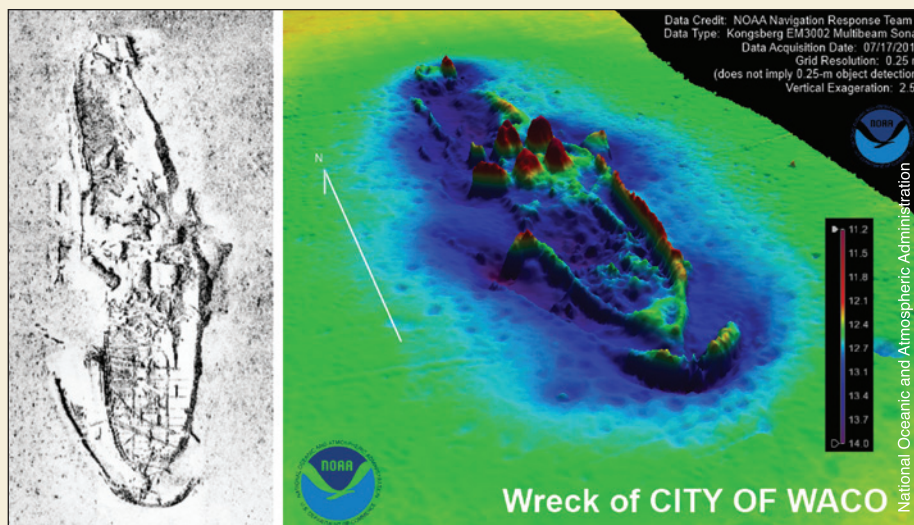
the evening of January 11, its captain and crew could never have anticipated the mark it would make on history or its influence on protective legislation for historic shipwrecks more than 100 years later.

*Hatteras* approached the unidentified steamship, only to discover it was the infamous Confederate raider *CSS Alabama*. *Hatteras* was disabled during a brief exchange of cannon fire, and sank in less than 15 minutes with the loss of two lives. This was the only naval battle during the Civil War to occur offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, and the only U.S. warship sunk at sea by Confederate forces during the war.

Dr. Paul Cloutier, a Rice University physics professor, discovered the shipwreck in 1976, and his early salvage



survey using side-scan and multi-beam sonar systems. As part of this effort, the THC's state marine archeologist teamed with NOAA's Office of Coastal Study (OCS), using its crew and survey vessel, and staff from NOAA's Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGB-NMS) aboard its research vessel *Manta*.



A side-scan and BlueView multi-beam image of *City of Waco*

In zero-to-low visibility dive projects, sonar is considered the most effective method to visualize a wreck site. The remote-sensing survey revealed *Hatteras* appeared to be in much the same condition as observed by Tesla Offshore in 2010. As part of the July 2012 work, data was also collected on the *City of Waco* wreck, located about 3 miles off Galveston.

*City of Waco* was a 242-foot iron-hulled Mallory Line passenger and freight steamer that sank while anchored during a storm in November 1875. The vessel caught fire, killing all 56 passengers and crew. This event is the largest maritime disaster in Texas history. Sonar and multi-beam data demonstrated *City of Waco*, like

*Hatteras*, had become more exposed on the seabed in recent years.

The second stage of *Hatteras* investigations occurred in September 2012, including BlueView and sector-scanning sonar data collection and limited diver investigations.

Unlike traditional sonar used in shipwreck surveys, BlueView collects highly detailed information about a ship's surfaces in three dimensions. According to Dr. James Delgado, director of NOAA's Maritime Heritage Program, *Hatteras* presented a unique opportunity to test the efficacy of this technology on a shipwreck that was only slightly projecting from the seafloor (as opposed to a more-intact wreck). Work was preceded by a

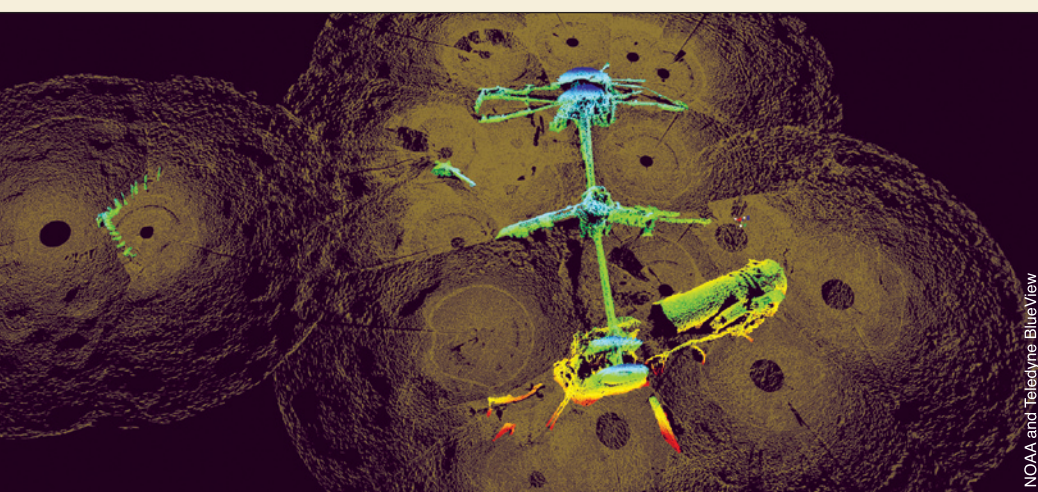
memorial service for those lost in battle.

During two days of diving on the site, the visibility was a murky 5–7 feet. Divers from FGBNMS and marine archeologists from BSEE and BOEM descended almost 60 feet from *Manta* to position the BlueView. Additional divers,

including those from THC and Tesla Offshore, worked from two chartered vessels to prepare the site and assess the wreck. Non-diver observers on *Manta* included students from Texas A&M University at Galveston's Sea Camp, local historians, and NHHC staff.

The BlueView data was unveiled in January 2013, along with a new original painting by Tom Freeman, at the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Galveston hosted by the Galveston Historical Foundation. At the Galveston event, Delgado and author Dr. Norman Delaney presented talks on the history of *Hatteras* and the recent archeological investigation. Representatives from THC, BOEM, BSEE, and the Galveston County Museum worked alongside NOAA in presenting exhibits on maritime archeology and Galveston's Civil War history at the Texas Seaport Museum in conjunction with other exhibits highlighting NOAA's work on *Hatteras* and the FGBNMS. *Hatteras*, through this recent collaboration, continues to make its mark on history with the first use of BlueView technology in an offshore environment.

"It's exciting for our agency to be a part of this pioneering investigation," Mercado-Allinger says. "We're looking forward to continuing these important partnerships in our future work." ★



BlueView image of *USS Hatteras*

# Treasured Texas Companies

Award Honors Historic Businesses Contributing to State's Economy

By *Andy Rhodes*  
 Managing Editor, The Medallion

Earlier this year, Texas First Lady Anita Perry honored several iconic businesses at the State Capitol during a ceremony for the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) expanded Texas Treasure Business Award. Since then, the award has garnered statewide attention, resulting in other high-profile businesses vying to become associated with this esteemed group.

One especially notable nomination was for the 100-year-old Woodson Lumber Company, a Brazos Valley-based family business that's grown from a small hardware store in Caldwell to a multi-unit manufacturing and retail organization in the region. The company prides itself on playing a significant role in "building Texas" with its products during the state's immense growth of the past century.

Woodson Lumber's award nomination was submitted by THC Commissioner Judy Richardson, who noted that the company is "a classic example for the Texas Treasure Business Award."

"I remember going into Woodson Lumber as a child to shop for needs with my father, a contractor," she said. "So, when the award was re-introduced and we were planning Woodson's 100 years in business, I saw it as a perfect fit."

Richardson adds that her support for Woodson Lumber extends to the company's involvement in local activities and projects, including the chamber of commerce, hospital, fire department, city and county government, and the community's Harry P. Woodson Memorial Library.

The award has also drawn interest from urban areas like Fort Worth, where native resident Sen. Wendy Davis recently

nominated her hometown business of Komatsu Architecture. The firm, founded in 1959, has designed significant public, commercial, and residential structures across the United States, including several in Texas. Notable projects include courthouse restorations with the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (Cooke, Franklin, Hamilton, and Lampasas counties), Fort Worth's botanical gardens, zoo, and St. Stephen Presbyterian Cathedral, and a master plan for the University of Texas at Arlington.

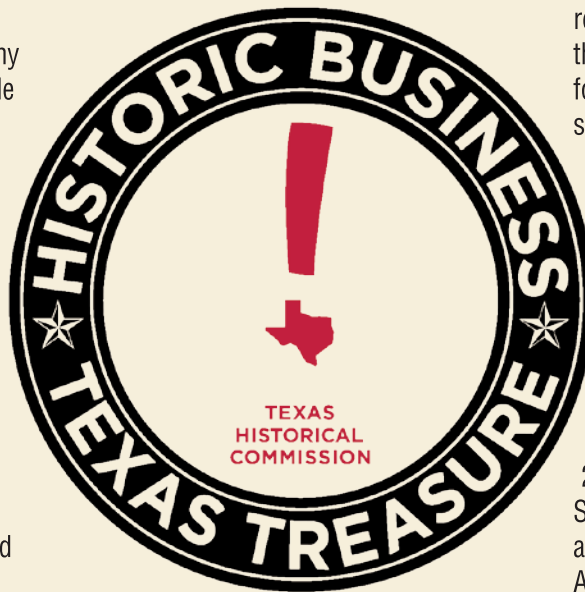
Komatsu Architecture joins the 42 and growing number of noteworthy companies for historical contributions to the state's economic growth and prosperity (for a full list, see [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)). The businesses are being celebrated as part of the THC's newly expanded program to recognize the accomplishments of Texas companies—from local, family-owned operations to national food suppliers and financial institutions—that have remained in continuous operation for at least 50 years.

"It is a privilege to be able to recognize our long-established businesses that have remained committed to Texans for generations, while creating jobs and stimulating economic growth," Anita Perry said at the Capitol ceremony.

The Texas Treasure Business Award program pays tribute to companies that are part of Texas history, having provided employment for at least 50 years in Texas and offering exceptional historical contributions to the state's economic growth. The program was created in 2005 through legislation authored by Sen. Leticia Van de Putte of San Antonio and sponsored by Rep. Charles "Doc" Anderson of Waco. The THC is expanding the program, offering special recognition through a window decal identifying the business as a Texas Treasure.

"Consumers will know when they spot the familiar Texas Treasure business icon that they are doing business with a successful, longtime Texas-owned-and-operated company," Wolfe said.

To download a nomination form, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us). For more information about the award, call 512.463.6092. ★



The Texas Treasure Business Award honors iconic Texas companies in operation for at least 50 years.

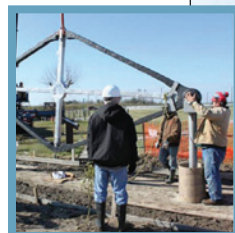
"Komatsu Architecture is a wonderful example of a historic Texas business that has had a significant cultural impact on the state's development," said THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe. "Texas has been transformed by their work, and the firm has made lasting economic and cultural contributions to our state."



# Opening Sabine Pass

THC Site Proudly Displays New Civil War Exhibits, Artifacts

By Andy Rhodes  
Managing Editor, The Medallion



Above: Installation of the *USS Clifton's* "walking beam" at Sabine Pass this January.  
At right: Site staffer Efrem Hill peers through a new location scope.

The Battle of Sabine Pass was considered one of the Confederate Army's most successful maritime victories of the Civil War. Sabine Pass Battleground—now one of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) 20 state historic sites—recently received several interpretive upgrades to help better tell the real stories of this real place in Texas history.

In September 1863, Union forces, attempting to secure access to railroads and valuable cotton-shipping routes in southeast Texas, sent four gunboats up Sabine Pass to land troops just a few miles north of where the Sabine River empties into the Gulf of Mexico. On the day of the battle, United States Navy Captain Frederick Crocker entered the Sabine River with four gunboats, accompanied by 18 troop transports containing some 5,000 federal infantrymen. The Confederate forces, under the command of Lt. Richard Dowling, consisted of approximately 40 men armed with six mounted cannons.

Despite these odds, the Confederate troops fired on the advancing gunboats with impressive accuracy, resulting in a fatal explosion from a direct hit to the boiler of the *USS Sachem*, and causing the *USS Clifton* to run aground. By the end

of the battle, Dowling's men, primarily consisting of the Davis Guards of the First Texas Heavy Artillery Regiment, had captured 300 Union prisoners and two gunboats.

"It's a truly significant story—the Confederates were severely outnumbered yet they remained dedicated to their cause and secured an unexpected victory," says Brett Cruse, sites supervisor with the THC's Historic Sites Division. "It represents an important Civil War conflict in Texas, so we're proud to tell that story and interpret the battle site."

New visitor information at the site includes a cell phone tour and a pavilion exhibit with 11 interpretive panels describing events leading up to the battle, the battle action, and the site's significance in context with other Civil War events. Also added were two "scopes," allowing visitors to locate the Sabine Pass Lighthouse on the other side of the river, and see what the battle would have looked like through custom artwork superimposed on the existing river view.

In addition, a 1:10 scale model of the Confederate fort, Fort Griffin, now sits near its original location, giving visitors an understanding of the battle position and action, including the location of Union ships in the river.



Also, eight THC markers damaged in 2008 by Hurricane Ike were refinished and reinstalled.

In January of this year, another significant remnant of Sabine Pass' history was added to the site. The *Clifton's* "walking beam," a rare maritime artifact that assisted with propelling the ship's paddlewheel, was permanently installed on the grounds. After the *Clifton* wrecked in 1864, the walking beam was a visible landmark in the water until it was removed in 1911 and installed in a Beaumont park. In 2011, the walking beam was acquired by the THC before undergoing an extensive conservation process.

Sabine Pass Battleground is open year-round and offers free admission. Visitors can learn about this significant aspect of Texas history while enjoying the waterfront view, fishing, picnicking, and birding. ★

## SABINE PASS BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE

6100 Dick Dowling Rd., Port Arthur  
Open daily, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.  
512.463.7948  
[www.visitsabinepassbattleground.com](http://www.visitsabinepassbattleground.com)



# Casa Navarro to be Nominated as National Historic Landmark

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) was recently notified that the 1850s adobe homestead of Texas hero José Antonio Navarro will be nominated as a National Historic Landmark (NHL).

The nomination will be developed under the Secretary of the Interior's Latino Heritage Initiative, and will be funded and prepared by the National Park Service (NPS). Casa Navarro is one of 20 state historic sites operated by the THC.

The U.S. Department of the Interior claims Navarro is "the most influential Tejano of his generation," and his house is nationally significant for its association with him. The nomination will focus not only on his contribution as one of two native Tejano signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence,



Casa Navarro State Historic Site

but also on his prolific career as an advocate for an independent Texas.

"This is extremely good news, as designation as a National Historic Landmark would increase visitation and awareness of this important historic site," said Mark Wolfe, the THC's executive director. "NHL nominations can be costly and time consuming, so it is especially important to learn that NPS will be funding the nomination. We are very grateful for this level of support, which speaks to the significance of this site."

For more information about Casa Navarro, visit [www.visitcasanavarro.com](http://www.visitcasanavarro.com) or call 210.226.4801. ★

## PRESERVATION TEXAS COMMEMORATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES

A dozen sites—six saved, three lost, and three threatened—have been named by Preservation Texas to its 10th anniversary retrospective list of Texas' Most Endangered Historic Places. Preservation Texas officials announced the selections on the steps of the Texas State Capitol on Preservation Day, February 20.

"The 2013 list provides a retrospective for us," said Charlene Orr, president of Preservation Texas, Inc., a statewide partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "We decided to focus on lessons learned during the last 10 years by highlighting success stories as well as losses and threatened sites that continue to need urgent attention."

The announcement ceremony included a presentation by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as part of its "I Love Texas Courthouses" campaign. The National Trust and Preservation Texas launched the campaign with support from the THC. In 1998 and again in 2012, the National Trust named Texas courthouses on its list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

To learn about the properties and the Most Endangered Places list, visit [www.preservationtexas.org](http://www.preservationtexas.org). ★

## TRAVEL THROUGH TIME WITH THC'S NEW HERITAGE TOURISM WEBSITE

Travelers planning a trip through Texas can go much farther than before with the THC's updated Texas Time Travel website. The THC recently launched the enhanced [TexasTimeTravel.com](http://TexasTimeTravel.com), featuring more in-depth information to easily explore Texas' historic sites and cities across all 10 Texas Heritage Trail Regions.

The revamped site offers improved searches, allowing visitors to learn more about Texas history based on their specific interests or plans. Designated travel themes organize the state's historic destinations by topic, and interactive maps and new images allow users to easily navigate their destinations. With the aid of event calendars, travelers can also see what special happenings are taking place in towns all across Texas. Each of the 10 trail region websites featured on [TexasTimeTravel.com](http://TexasTimeTravel.com) have been upgraded as well.

Visitors can also plan their own adventure based on their current location, destination, or travel route. New mobile-friendly versions of [TexasTimeTravel.com](http://TexasTimeTravel.com) and all 10 THC trail regions make it easy for travelers to access information while on the road. Visit [www.TexasTimeTravel.com](http://www.TexasTimeTravel.com) to start your adventure! ★

# Acknowledging Exceptional Service

## Quantity, Quality of CHC Accomplishments Awarded

By Amy Hammons, County Historical Commission Outreach Coordinator



Lavaca County Historical Commission members received the THC's 2012 Distinguished Service Award from County Judge Tramer J. Woytek.

Volunteer organizations are of great value, whatever the magnitude of their service. Though the impact of work performed by County Historical Commissions (CHC) may vary greatly, it is important to remember that different interests and accomplishments contribute to saving the history of Texas.

As with most volunteer networks, it is essential to acknowledge service “above and beyond” to honor outstanding efforts and illustrate the power of cohesive collaboration within an organization. While all service is

valued, there are some CHCs that distinguish themselves from others by their consistent effort and quality programming.

When selecting criteria with which to compare CHCs, we are often drawn to the leadership, and rightly so; quality leadership is required to sustain a healthy

body whatever the mission may be. However, many times it is the individual appointees who take a CHC from good to great.

Most CHCs flourish because a handful of people decide local history is important enough to dedicate time toward projects that record or interpret that history. The impact of CHCs greatly increases when a team of people decide to work together to engage their community in activities that celebrate history and save historic places.

The Distinguished Service Award (DSA) recognizes CHCs that set

themselves apart. In 2010, the Texas Historical Commission requested DSA criteria be established to elevate preservation efforts around the state and to emphasize the importance of sustaining healthy organizations. This request was made because CHCs continually reported a lack of interest in history within their county and the absence of potential volunteers.

The CHC Outreach Program was tasked with strengthening the CHCs' organizational structure to address these issues and encourage CHCs to build their volunteer capacity—to find ways to involve all appointees with responsibilities rather than only a few.

For this reason, the DSA criteria embodies statutory responsibilities that relate to organizational support and projects that demonstrate broad member support. CHCs who perform at this level are able to sustain long-term preservation programs that enrich regional and statewide preservation efforts. These are the CHCs that distinguish themselves from others.

To find out more about DSAs, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us) and search “Service Awards for CHCs.” ★

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### Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.





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## WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

Know your Texas history? Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email to [medallion@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:medallion@thc.state.tx.us). Limit one prize annually per contestant.

Need a clue? This Texas Mountain Trail Region site was a small farming and trading community in the early 1900s, but it is now part of something much Bigger.



Answer to the photo from the last issue: The site pictured is the Willis King Administration Building, a former Carnegie Library on the Wiley College campus in Marshall. The college flourished due to the large number of freedmen in the area after emancipation. Congratulations to Ralph Newlan of Austin and Erie

Stowers of Ledbetter for submitting the correct answer.  
Thanks to all participants! ★

