

APRIL 4, 2020 | UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

# San Jacinto Symposium

MYTHS, MYSTERIES, AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS OF SAN JACINTO



# PROGRAM

**8:15**

**Doors Open for registration**

**9:00**

**Introductions**

**9:15**

**Stephen L. Hardin, *The Infernal Kind of Book: The Venomous Pamphlet that Shook the Texas Republic***

This presentation will discuss the controversial 1837 pamphlet, *Houston Displayed; or, Who Won the Battle of San Jacinto?*—the first and most influential of the anti-Houston literature. Historians have observed that the Republic of Texas did not have political parties, per se, and that its politics basically broke down into those who supported Sam Houston, “The Sword of San Jacinto,” and those who opposed him. As soon as it hit the streets, the pamphlet provided the anti-Houston faction with its issue, platform, and voice. For the rest of his career, Houston was haunted by what he termed “this infernal kind of book.” The presentation will discuss its anonymous author, Colonel Robert M. Coleman, as well as the cabal of influential men who encouraged him and clandestinely supported his efforts. It will examine how earlier authorities have used and, in most cases, misused, or ignored this vital source. Finally, it will consider many of the controversies Coleman’s polemic initiated—many of which have lingered to the present day.

**10:00  
Break**

**10:15**

**James Woodrick, *The Cannons of San Jacinto***

Three cannons played a critical role at San Jacinto - two in Sam Houston’s army and one in Santa Anna’s. The Texian cannons are known as the Twin Sisters, and the Mexican cannon as the Golden Standard. Over the years much confusion has existed as to the caliber and material of the Twin Sisters. Were they 6-pounders, or 4’s? Were they iron or brass? The Texans who wrote about the Golden Standard all thought it was bigger than what the professional Mexican army officers knew they had. What happened to these cannons after San Jacinto? Were the Twin Sisters buried in Harrisburg after the Civil War? Was the Golden Standard lost at sea? The digital revolution has now made available archival documents that were virtually impossible for historians to access only a few years ago. Through these records we now know the factual story of the San Jacinto artillery, from the origins of the cannons, how they were used in the battle, and what ultimately happened to them.

**11:00  
Break**

**11:15**

**Jesús F. de la Teja, *Recollections of a Mexico-Texan Patriot: Antonio Menchaca Remembers the San Jacinto Campaign***

By the 1870s Antonio Menchaca was one of the best-remembered veterans of the Texas Revolution. His stories of early San Antonio, the Mexican War of Independence, and the Texas Revolution received colorful and somewhat fanciful interpretations from Menchaca, who often found a way to become the center of the tales. In his recollections of San Jacinto, he is a friend to both the Texian leadership and Santa Anna, and his imaginary ambitions knew no bounds. This presentation will focus on how Menchaca’s version of events have influenced recent writings on the battle, especially as they represent one of only two accounts produced by Tejano participants in the events.

**12:00**

**Morning Q&A**

**12:15**

**Lunch**

**Guest speaker:**

**Bill Irwin, *The Future of San Jacinto Battleground***

**1:30**

**James Crisp, *The Man Who Wasn’t There: Herman Ehrenberg Tells the Stories of the Alamo and San Jacinto***

Unlike Antonio Menchaca’s story of the San Jacinto campaign, Ehrenberg’s writings are not his “recollections,” because he was at Goliad and at Matagorda when these two battles took place, respectively. This presentation emphasizes that he was writing as a typical citizen of the Texas Republic, freely mixing facts and misconceptions, and using, as most all Texans did, the history of the revolution as a key to understanding and appreciating the Texan character as he saw it. Because Ehrenberg’s take on the Alamo is a key to understanding his interpretation of the Revolution, it must be addressed in order to properly understand his depiction of San Jacinto.

**2:15  
Break**

**2:30**

**Sam Haynes, *Monument and Memory in Texas History: From Sacred Site to Martial Symbol***

Since the late nineteenth century, monuments have helped Texans celebrate their state’s past. But like any cultural artifact, the historical monument can be seen in different ways. This lecture will examine the gendered dimensions of commemoration and memory, focusing on the ways in which women’s organizations, such as the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and male business leaders used monuments such as the San Jacinto Monument to create their own distinct interpretations of the state’s heritage.

**3:15  
Afternoon Q&A**

**3:30  
Adjournment**

**We Offer CPE for the Program**



# SPEAKERS

## James Crisp

### Professor Emeritus of History at North Carolina State University in Raleigh

James has authored or co-authored 10 books relating to Texas history, and his work has received state, national, and international awards for excellence. His award-winning *Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution* has been translated into Spanish and published in Mexico. For the past 28 years, he has been gathering evidence for a thoroughly annotated translation of Herman Ehrenberg's enigmatic memoir of the Texas Revolution--originally published in Germany in 1843. Since most of what has been written by Texas historians about Ehrenberg is false, and much of what Ehrenberg himself has to say is equally false, a thoroughly-documented account of his nevertheless valuable and famous memoir is long overdue.

## Stephen L. Hardin

### Professor of History at McMurry University in Abilene, Texas

Stephen is the author of six books, including the award-winning *Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution*, *Texian Macabre: The Melancholy Tale of a Hanging in Early Houston*, and *Lust for Glory: An Epic Story of Early Texas and the Sacrifice that Defined a Nation*, recipient of the 2019 Summerfield G. Roberts Award. When not engaged in the classroom, he serves as an on-air commentator, appearing on such varied venues as the A&E Network, the History Channel, and NBC's TODAY show, and acted as historical advisor for the John Lee Hancock film, "*The Alamo*." Dr. Hardin is an inductee of the Texas Institute of Letters, an admiral in the Texas Navy, and a Life Member and Fellow of the Texas State Historical Association.

## Sam Haynes

### Professor of History at the University of Texas at Arlington

Sam was appointed director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies at UT-Arlington in May, 2009. Specializing in 19th century Texas and the American Southwest, Haynes is the author of three books, including *Soldiers of Misfortune: The Somervell and Mier Expeditions*. In addition, he has co-edited several books, including *Contested Empire: Rethinking the Texas Revolution*. He is also the co-editor, with Cary Wintz, of an anthology, *Major Problems in Texas History*. Haynes is an active member of several historical organizations, including the Texas State Historical Association. In 1993 he was awarded the Dobie-Paisano prize by the Texas Institute of Letters, and was inducted as a TIL Fellow in 1999. He has also served as a historical consultant for the History Channel and PBS. In 2008 he served as the lead consultant for the History Channel's two-hour documentary, "The Mexican War." He is currently the Bill and Rita Clements Senior Research Fellow at the Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University, where he is completing "Border Land: The Struggle for Texas," for Basic Books.

## Bill Irwin

### Director of Historic Site Operations for Texas Independence Sites, Texas Historical Commission

Bill has worked with outdoor museums and historic sites in Iowa, Minnesota, Utah and Arizona. He also worked with Texas historic sites, including Barrington Plantation Living History Site, Washington-on-the-Brazos and San Jacinto for the past twenty four years.

## Jesús F. de la Teja

### Regents' Professor Emeritus at Texas State University

Frank taught history and served as department chairman and as director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest. Between 1985 and 1991 he worked in the Archives and Records Division of the General Land Office. He has published extensively on Spanish, Mexican, and Republic-era Texas, and has served as book review editor for the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* and as managing editor of *Catholic Southwest: A Journal of History and Culture*. He was the inaugural State Historian of Texas (2007- 2009), is a Fellow of the Texas State Historical Association and of the Texas Catholic Historical Society, and is a member of the Texas Institute of Letters and the Philosophical Society of Texas. He most recently served as CEO of the Texas State Historical Association.

## James Woodrick

### Author

James was raised in Austin County, Texas and attended Bellville schools, where he graduated in 1961. During the next five years he attended the University of Texas at Austin and graduated with a Master of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. During a 28-year career with DuPont, Jim held positions in technology, operations, business and manufacturing management in Victoria, Alvin, Houston and Orange, Texas, and in Wilmington, North Carolina and Wilmington, Delaware. He served eight years as Plant Manager at DuPont's facilities at Chocolate Bayou (Alvin) and Sabine River Works (Orange). After DuPont Jim served for ten years as President of Texas Chemical Council, the trade association representing the state's chemical industry. Jim has had a lifelong interest in history, particularly that of Texas and Spanish Colonial Mexico, and has published several books on those subjects.

## Master of Ceremonies

### Jeff Dunn

### Practicing attorney with Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr, PC in Dallas

Jeff has had a lifelong interest in the battle of San Jacinto. Jeff has lectured and published articles on the battle, presented tours of the battleground, and advocated the preservation and interpretation of the battleground landscape. He co-founded the nonprofit San Jacinto Battleground Association (also called the San Jacinto Battleground Conservancy) in 2002 and served as Chairman of the San Jacinto Historical Advisory Board (2000-2007) as an appointee of Governors George W. Bush and Rick Perry. He has also served as Chairman of the Dallas County Historical Commission and as a Board member of the Texas State Historical Association.

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