Texana / Genealogy

San Antonio Public Library Texana / Genealogy
Find Texana / Genealogy online by visiting mysapl.org/texana. Here you will find the On this day in San Antonio blog, past issues of South Texas Researcher, information about upcoming classes and guides to help you in your genealogy research.

Texana / Genealogy Department is located on the sixth floor of the Central Library, 600 Soledad 78205. The department is open to the public Tuesdays through Saturdays:

- Tuesday 12:00pm - 8:00 pm
- Wednesday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
- Thursday 12:00pm - 8:00 pm
- Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
- Saturday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Library Guides from Texana / Genealogy
The Library Guides are subject bibliographies with a current twist—databases, websites, event schedule, blogs, as well as books. The department now has the following guides on the library's website under Resources:

- Cemeteries
- Civil War
- Civil War in Texas
- Death
- Family History
- HeritageQuest Online
- Hispanic Genealogical Research
- Jewish Genealogy
- King James Bible
- La Meri
- Local History
- Texas History
Events & Classes

Exploring HeritageQuest

The HeritageQuest database has recently been expanded and is now available to use from home! Join the Texana/Genealogy Department to learn how to utilize the new interface and the useful features of this powerful database.

Tuesday, 5 May 2015 at 2:00 pm

Registration is required

Central Library
600 Soledad 78205
Call 210.207.2500 for more information.
(Ask for Texana/Genealogy)

Ancestry.com: Who Will You Find?

One of the most popular genealogy databases available today, Ancestry (Library Edition) is made available for FREE at all SAPL locations! Join us and see how the site is organized, and learn the best ways to begin searching for your ancestors.

Tuesday, 11 May 2015 at 6:00 pm
Encino Branch Library (opening May 2)
2515 E. Evans
San Antonio, TX 78259
New Publications

Genetic Genealogy: The Basics and Beyond
(GENEALOGY 599.935 DOOLIN-AULICINO)

The History and Records of San Patricio de Bexar Church at Bexar, Texas
(TEXANA 976.435 SAN PATRICIO)

Brownsville: Memories of Home
(TEXANA 976.4495 BROWNSVILLE)

Community Partners

Los Bexareños Genealogical and Historical Society

Meetings are normally held at 9:30 a.m. at the Central Library Auditorium. Visitors are welcome to attend. Membership is not required. Speakers at the meetings are people with a passion for history, professional historians, genealogists, archaeologists and researchers.

For the April Meeting

Date: May 2, 2015
Speaker: Alfredo E. Cardenas
Topic: His Book, "Balo’s War: A Historical Novel about the Plan of San Diego"

January 6, 2015 was the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Plan de San Diego, which purported to incite a rebellion against the United States and form a new nation in the American southwest. Balo's War is a fictional account about the genesis of the Plan and its eventual outcome.

This book tells the story of a people that went from being Spaniard, to Mexican, to Texan, to American, to Confederate, and back to American in a short span of 50 years. They struggled to hold on to their land, their language, their culture, their history against insurmountable odds. They lived in what can truly be called "Medio México." It was an area claimed by distant capitals in México City and Washington DC, but ruled by neither. They were caught in between, en medio, of two languages, two cultures, two legal systems, two political systems, and two monetary and economic systems. Despite it all, they survived and flourished. It was not easy by any means; to survive they had to fight and die for what they believed, what they owned, what they knew, what they wanted for their children.

Balo's War is a fictional story of what could have happened based on what did happen. The central characters and what they said are not real but they are based on true events and actual people. The interaction of these fictional characters and real persons did not happen but are based on events the real persons participated in and on actions they took.
About the author: Alfredo E. Cardenas was born, raised, and educated in San Diego, Texas. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from St. Mary's University in San Antonio.

He founded and published the Duval County Picture, a weekly newspaper, from 1987-1999. He also served as mayor of San Diego for two terms, from 1992-1999. He currently serves as editor of the South Texas Catholic.

He has written book reviews for the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and Catholic Southwest, A Journal of History and Culture. He has published history articles in the Journal of South Texas and The Handbook of Texas. He has also written columns for various Texas newspapers on history and current affairs. He currently publishes a history blog, Soy de Duval, available online at soydeduval.blogspot.com and a blog on his upcoming novel Balo's War, available online at www.mcmbooks.com

Note: In November, 2009, the Society rented a building on the campus of Holy Rosary Parish to house our Library. The Parish is located at 159 Camino Santa Maria just north of Culebra Rd. The Library is manned by volunteers on Saturdays, except the 1st Saturday of the month. The hours are 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. There is no charge to use the Library and one need not be a member of the Society.

Help for the beginning genealogists:
The Society assists individuals in getting started with genealogical research through beginner's workshops. Beginners also receive assistance from the more experienced members of the Society.

Contact one of the following individuals by email or phone to schedule an appointment:

Dennis Moreno 210.647.5607
Yolanda Patiño 210.434.3530

Southwest Vaqueros Third Tuesday Meetings
Southwest Vaqueros was founded by Al Lowman and his friends when he was a researcher and writer for the Institute of Texan Cultures. Among his friends were John Woodhull and Charlie Schreiner III. His personal library and collection are now housed in the Cushing Library at the TAMU campus. Southwest Vaqueros is a Corral of Westerners International.

Third Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Papa Dante's Italian Restaurant
8607 FM 1976
Converse, TX 78109

Call 210.418.4087 or email jltolleson@sbcglobal.net for more information.
San Antonio Genealogical & Historical Society
In addition to Beginner and Intermediate Genealogy classes, the San Antonio Genealogical & Historical Society is offering its Sunday afternoon *How to Find Out Who You Are* classes. Cost is $5.00 for members, $10 for non-members. Call 210.342.5242 or email saghs@sbglobal.net for reservations.

With over 16,500 volumes, 600+ maps, a large vertical file collection and internet access to several great databases, the SAG&HS Library is one of the best private repositories of genealogical and historical material in South Texas.

The San Antonio Genealogical & Historical Society Library is located at 911 Melissa Drive, off Blanco Rd, outside Loop 410 and is open Monday 10am - 4pm, Wednesday 10 am -9pm, Saturday 10am - 4pm and Sunday 1 - 5pm. Members research free. Non-members may research for a $5.00 donation per day. Tours of the library are free. For more information, visit www.txsaghs.com

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The Witte Museum

**Jewels of the Court: A Journey Through Fiesta's Coronation**
7 March - 3 May 2015

**Discover the Ice Age**
opens May 23

**Bodies Revealed**
opens October 3

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The McNay

**World War II in Photographs: Looking Back**
13 January - 10 May 2015

**World War II in Photographs: Looking Back**
Rodin to Warhol
60th Anniversary Gifts and Recent Acquisitions
18 Feb. - 17 May 2015

**All the Rage in Paris**
Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909-1929
18 February - 21 June 2015

**Design, Fashion, Theatre**
The Art of Pochoir in France, 1910-1930
18 February - 21 June 2015

**The Three Worlds of José Arpa y Perea: Spain, Mexico, and San Antonio**
18 April - 21 June 2015

**Jamie Wyeth**
25 April - 5 July 2015
News

Historical Topographic Maps - Preserving the Past

In 2009, USGS began the release of a new generation of topographic maps (US Topo) in electronic form, and is now complementing them with the release of high-resolution scans of more than 178,000 historical topographic maps of the United States. The topographic map remains an indispensable tool for everyday use in government, science, industry, land management planning, and recreation.

Historic maps are snapshots of the nation's physical and cultural features at a particular time. Maps of the same area can show how an area looked before development and provide a detailed view of changes over time. Historical maps are often useful to scientists, historians, environmentalists, genealogists and others researching a particular geographic location or area.

The Historical Topographic Map Collection (HTMC) exists online as a digital collection at http://nationalmap.gov/historical/ and as a physical paper collection of maps in the USGS Clarence King Library in Reston, Virginia.

Back Up Your Genealogy Files!

It is the first of the month. It's time to back up your genealogy files. Then test your backups! Actually, you can make backups at any time. However, it is easier and safer if you have a specific schedule. The first day of the month is easy to remember, so I would suggest you back up your genealogy files at least on the first day of every month, if not more often. Of course, you might want to back up more than your genealogy files. Family photographs, your checkbook register, all sorts of word processing documents, email messages, and much more need to be backed up regularly. Why not do that on the first day of each month?
WHEN AND HOW MISSION SAN ANTONIO DE VALERO CAME TO BE CALLED THE
ALAMO

By: Rev. Eugene Surgranes, C.M.F.

Age-old records that are of the far-famed "Archives of the Indies in Seville, Spain, and
founded by King Charles III, now part of a priceless collection housed in the museum of San
Fernando Cathedral uncover much of the mystery so long shrouding the early history of the
Alamo."

For instance, the famous shrine on Alamo Plaza was not built in 1718, as so many suppose.
The cornerstone of the hallowed structure known at the time as Mission of San Antonio de
Valero, was not laid until 1844, so the old records show. Found also in the San Fernando
archives is the writing and signature of Padre Antonio Margil, the illustrious founder of the
chain of missions in and around San Antonio. For more than a century search has been under
way for a document of this nature. Another interesting bit is the record of the marriage of
James Bowie, so every schoolboy should know, was one of the gallant defenders who fell at
the Alamo and generally looked upon as the inventor of the Bowie knife.

It is due to the persistent and untiring efforts of the Rev. Camillo Torrents, C.M.F. archivist
and librarian at San Fernando, that these long sought records again see the light. His
remarkable patience has been crowned with greater success than was anticipated, and these
historical facts lend even at this late day their glamour to the romance of the past.

The signature and writing of the venerable founder of the missions Padre Antonio Margil
occurs in the archives only one, in the first book of baptismal, which dated from 1703, page
53, No. 59. The date of the record is given as February 4, 1720.

Like all the records, it is written in Spanish and translated into our vernacular, and runs as
follows: "In the year 1720, on the 4th of February, with permission of the Rev. Fray Antonio
de San Buenaventura Y Olivares, Minister of this Mission de San Antonio De Valero, I
baptized and anointed both with the oil of catechumena and the holy chrism, Anastasia, an
infant girl, daughter of Balthasar Valero of the Pamaya Indian Tribe and Juana Gardenas of
the Payagan Tribe, Santiago de Vega, a soldier, whom I reminded of his duties and spiritual
relationship to his god-child, stood as sponsor, And because it is true I signed this record on
the aforesaid day, month and year." "Signed: "Antonio Margil de Jesus."

Another record which was neither written nor signed by Padre Margil mentions his name. It
reads as follows: "The bones of the Indian Isidro the husband of Rosa, illed by the Indian
Apaches on the Texas road and brought here by our Father Margil, were buried on May 15,
1722. Signed: Fray Jose Gonzales."

Father Antonio de San Buenaventura y Olivares, whose name appears "in the baptismal
record signed by Father Margil, was the first Minister of Superior of Mission "San Antonio de
Valero" commonly know as the "Alamo."

There were two more records originally written and signed by Padre Margil which were later
on lost. However, exact copies of the same were made and preserved by the first archivist of
the old San Fernando Cathedral Fray Diego Marin Garcia. They ran as follows: "Number 96,
On the 16th day of March, 1721, I was called from the Presidio of San Antonio to visit two
dying Indians on the "Rancheria Grande." The first one was a very old man and the second
was an Indian woman about 30 years old. Being in imminent danger of death and their
minds being clear, I instructed them and baptized them. To the old man I gave the name of
Patrick of the Cross and to the woman Josephine Mary. And because it is true I affixed my
"Number 97. On the 21st day of March, 1721, the Rev. Father Minister sent me to visit an old Indian woman of the Pamaya Tribe. She was very sick, and detesting her pagan errors seemingly with all sincerity and truth, she requested to be baptized. Having instructed her, I baptized her and gave her the name of 'Gabriela.' The 'Fiscal,' Gabriel de Ibarra, stood as sponsor. And because it is true I signed this record at this Mission of San Antonio de Valero on said day, month, and year. Signed: Antonio Margil de Jesus.

How dearly beloved and highly esteemed was the venerable Padre Antonio Margil, even in the early days of the missions, is shown by the records found in the first book of marriages of Mission San Jose de Aguayo founded by Padre Margil.

There we find the marriage record of an Indian Comanche named "Antonio Margil" after the illustrious founder of the missions. He was married to an Indian woman of the "Borrados" tribe called "Antonia." The Indian Governor of San Jose, a superintendent and overseer of the Indian neophytes. The witnesses were Juan de Mata, alcalde, a kind of chief of police, and Thomas, the cook of the mission. The titles of Governor, alcalde and such like were given by the mission fathers to some distinguished Indians. They held office for one year and were installed with colorful ceremonies in the church. So the mission Indians governed themselves under the watchful care of the Franciscan padres and the protection of the Spanish soldiers. Here we find the first attempts of self-government. The marriage record of the Indian "Antonio Margil" was signed by the minister of the mission on October 14, 1795.

The record of the laying of the cornerstone of the Alamo appears in the first book of baptisms. It reads as follows:
On the 8th day of May, 1744, the first stone of the new church of San Antonio was blessed and laid by the ministers of the mission, Padres Fray Mariano Francisco de los Dolores, Fray Diego Martin Garcia and Fray Juan de los Angeles. In witness where of I sign this record at this Mission of San Antonio on September 29, 1745. (Signed) Fray Deigo Martin Garcia."

It is clear from the records that the present Alamo is not first church of the mission. As it was often the case, the Franciscan at first built a temporary chapel which, for the time being, answered the purpose, and later on they erected a more beautiful, commodious and substantial structure.

The original name of the mission was "San Antonio de Valero," in remembrance of the celebrated Viceroy Marquis de Valero. Later on, in order that the mission might be distinguished from the town of San Antonio, and in memory of the brave soldiers that many a time defended and protected the mission against the depredations of the wild Indians, it was called the "Alamo."

These soldiers belong to the famous "Campania Volante del Alamo de Parras," Coahuila, Mexico. This company was formerly organized at Alamo de Parras, Coahuila. For long periods, especially between 1821 and 1825, the famous company acted as guard or "escolta" of the Mission San Antonio de Valero. So brave and gallant and so well known and beloved were these soldiers of the "Compania Volante del Alamo de Parras" that the mission eventually was commonly called "El Alamo." The chaplain of that company frequently acted as the curate of San Antonio.
The record of the marriage of James Bowie, defender of the "Alamo" to Ursula de Veramendi, daughter of the Lieutenant Governor of Texas, is found in the second book of marriage. This record was written more elaborately than the preceding ones. It runs as follows "In the City of San Fernando de Bexar, on the 25th day of April, 1831, I, the priest Don Refugio de la Garza, pastor of this city, having performed the investigations prescribed by the Canon Law, published the banns on three consecutive feast days, "Inter Missarum Solmnia" during the High Mass, to wit, on the 11th, 17th and 24th of said month, and having found no canonical impediment, even after the lapse of 24 hours from last publication of the banns, I married and blessed at the nuptial mass, "In Facie Ecclesine" publicly in the church, Don Santiago Bowie and Albina Yons, and Miss Ursula de Veramendi, a native of this city, legitimate daughter of Don Juan Martin de Veramendi and Dona Maria Josefa Navarro. Their parents stood as sponsors and Don Jose Angel have hereunto affixed my signature. (Signed) Refugio de la Garza."

Don Juan Martin de Varamendi was Lieutenant Governor of Texas. Dona Maria Josefa Navarro, Bowie's mother-in-law, was sister of Don Jose Antonio Navarro, a patriot and signer of Texas Independence. J.A. Navarro of this city is a grandson of Don Jose Antonio Navarro, the signer of Texas Independence.

Don Jose Antonio Navarro was also one of the three commissioners that accompanied that famous expedition to New Mexico in 1841. The mission of that expedition to New Mexico was to urge the people of that territory to join the Texas Independence. They all fell into the hands of General Armijo and were made prisoners. Don Jose Antonio Navarro with the other members of the ill-fated expedition was taken to Mexico. There he spent four years in the famous penitentiary of San Juan de Ulloa at Vera Cruz. How he was, at length, released, or escaped has always been a mystery. The aged patriot and signer of the Texas Independence died in this city and was buried in the old San Fernando Cemetery.

Don Jose Angel Navarro, the witness at the marriage of James Bowie was a brother of Don Jose Antonio Navarro. Navarro County was named after the signer of the Texas Independence, and Corsicana. Navarro Street in San Antonio was also name after this illustrious family. The record number of Bowie's marriage is 388.

Father Refugio de la Garza was one of the most brilliant and scholarly rectors of the old San Fernando Cathedral. He was a powerful orator, and from 1824 to 1825, he was a member of the National Congress in Mexico. He had also the title of "Royal Chaplain: to His Majesty." He was rector of the old San Fernando church from 1820 to 1840.

The first Spanish explorers and colonists coming to San Antonio gave the name of Texas to what was formerly know as the "Province of the New Phillipines." These sturdy pioneers and pathfinders noticed that the Indians in the new territory wore earring in the form and shape of tiles. Now "tiles" mean "tejas" in Spanish. So they called the aborigines the "Tejas Indians." Eventually the whole territory came to be known as "Tejas" or Texas." The road from Nacagdoches to San Antonio was known as the "Tejas Road.

The title page of the oldest book in the archives of the old San Fernando Cathedral contains a comprehensive resume of the early history of the missions. This book was begun in 1703 according to the testimony of this record in 1703 the "Alamo Mission," under the name of "San Francisco de Solano," was founded on the Rio Grande, afterwards the mission was moved in 1703 or 1709, to the interior of Texas and was called "San Ildefonso; again in 1710,
or perhaps after in 1713. It was moved back to the Rio Grande and was called "San Jose." Finally the mission was moved by Father Antonio Margil to San Antonio de Bexar and located at San Pedro Springs under the name of San Antonio De Valero" about 1718; in 1732 it was again moved to Military Plaza in San Antonio and in 1744 to the site it now occupies, where, as already stated, it was named the Alamo.

*San Antonio Express, December 6, 1925*

The South Texas Researcher is a publication of the San Antonio Public Library Texana/Genealogy department. For more information, or to submit program information for an upcoming issue, email genealogydesk@sanantonio.gov by the deadline provided:

- June 2015 by May 15
- July 2015 by June 15
- August 2015 by July 15

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