San Antonio
300 Years of History
Dear Texas History Community,

Texas has a special place in history and in the minds of people throughout the world. Texas symbols such as the Alamo, oil wells, and even the shape of the state, as well as the men and women who worked on farms and ranches and who built cities convey a sense of independence, self-reliance, hard work, and courage. At the same time, Texas has long been a meeting place of many peoples and cultures, sharing much with the rest of the world. Texas history speaks a universal language.

For more than a century, the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) has played a leadership role in historical research and education and has helped to identify, collect, preserve, and tell the stories of Texas and the Southwest. TSHA works in collaboration with numerous colleges and universities, especially its host the University of Texas at Austin, to carry on and expand its work. In the coming years these organizations, with their partners and members, will continue to create a collaborative whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. This collaboration will provide passion, talent, and long-term support for the dissemination of scholarly research, educational programs for the K-12 community, and opportunities for public discourse about the complex issues and personalities of our heritage. This collaboration, at its best, will demonstrate that it is possible to find both simple truths and nuanced meanings in the study of the past.

TSHA’s core programs include the *Texas Almanac*, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, *Handbook of Texas*, TSHA Press, and education programs that reach out to students and teachers at all levels throughout the state. The central challenge before TSHA is to seize the unprecedented opportunities of the digital age in order to reshape how history will be accessed, understood, preserved, disseminated, and taught in the twenty-first century. In recent years, we have capitalized on these momentous opportunities to expand the scope and depth of our work in ways never before possible.
In the midst of this rapid change, TSHA will continue to provide a future for our heritage and to ensure that our history and the complex, always evolving, cultures found in the Southwest continue to serve as resources for the people of Texas and beyond. We encourage you to join us today as a member of TSHA, and in doing so, you will be part of a unique group of people dedicated to an inclusive Texas heritage and will help us continue to develop innovative programs that bring history to life.

Since 1897, TSHA has sought to spread the rich and varied history of Texas and the Southwest across not just the country but the world. As we celebrate progress across more than 120 years, we look forward to bringing our region’s past into your life through ever-shifting digital presences, the expansion of publications, and the growth of our immersive educational programs. With your membership, donations, and support, all these things are possible.

With appreciation for the past and hope for the future,

Jesús F. de la Teja
CEO
Texas State Historical Association

Walter L. Buenger
Chief Historian
Texas State Historical Association
San Antonio—A Dynamic City with a Colorful Past

In celebration of the city’s Tricentennial, the Texas State Historical Association is proud to present this special e-Book, *San Antonio: 300 Years of History*. Drawn from the resources of the *Handbook of Texas* and the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, this compilation offers a sampling of some of the many places, people, and events that have shaped the colorful history of the Alamo City.

San Antonio has played a vital role in the formation of Texas—going back to Spanish rule and the founding of Mission San Antonio de Valero and the San Antonio de Béxar Presidio in 1718. The city became the capital of Spanish Texas in 1773. San Antonio has been the focal point of poignant conflict as well as dynamic growth. The Texas Revolution immortalized the Alamo and its defenders as symbols of sacrifice, and generations throughout the nation and the world recognize the rallying cry “Remember the Alamo.” But the Alamo City’s rich heritage also includes a remarkable diversity of ethnicities underscoring its standing as a crossroads of cultures. This diversity is reflected in the industry, art, architecture, music, festivals, and cuisine of the city and creates the unique ambience that San Antonio proudly carries today. Now the seventh largest city in the United States, the warmth and enthusiasm of its citizenry still evoke the feel of a great big small town.

Once a center of agriculture and ranching, San Antonio, by the early twentieth century, was a hub of expanding industry, a growing transportation system, notable educational institutions, military installations, and a fledgling tourism trade. All of these facets forged strong bonds with the city during the last century and will continue to make up the tapestry of San Antonio in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Laurie E. Jasinski
Research Editor – Handbook of Texas
Texas State Historical Association
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Char Miller
San Antonio, located at the head of the San Antonio River in Bexar County in south central Texas, is on Interstate Highway 10 (east-west) and Interstate highways 35 and 37 (north-south). The city is also served by five U.S. highways, numerous state highways as well as Interstate (Loop) 410 and State Loop 1604, San Antonio International Airport, Stinson Airport, Union Pacific Railroad, and daily AMTRAK train service. San Antonio, also known by such titles as the Alamo City, the Mission City, the River City, and Military City, U.S.A. (which the city trademarked in 2017), has a 300-year history that stretches back to **Spanish Texas** with the establishment of a presidio, town, and five Franciscan missions along the San Antonio River. The city’s strategic role in two separate struggles for independence—the **fight for Mexican independence** in 1811–13 and for Texas independence in 1835–36—resulted in bloody conflict but also eventually entrenched San Antonio’s standing as a state and national symbol of the battle for self-government. During the second half of the nineteenth century, San Antonio, as the largest city in
Texas, supported a diverse native and immigrant population and further perpetuated its reputation as a crossroads of cultures. The city prospered as a center of agricultural and ranching activities, and its growing industry, advances in transportation, establishment of educational institutions, and strong connection to the military carried it firmly into the twentieth century and the post-World War II era. In recent decades San Antonio has become a top tourist destination.

Spanish expeditions explored the area in 1691 and 1709. In 1691 the expedition of Domingo Terán de los Ríos traveled through the region en route to East Texas and named the San Antonio River on June 13, the Feast Day of Portuguese Franciscan friar Saint Anthony of Padua. They also encountered an Indian area of settlement (which the Spaniards interpreted to have the name Yanaguana). The year 1691 has also been recognized as the beginning of a route, or more accurately a network of trails (caminos reales), that came to be known as the San Antonio-Nacogdoches Road (see OLD SAN ANTONIO ROAD). With stretches most likely developed from existing Indian trails, the road developed into a main artery for commerce and immigration. The Espinosa-Olivares-Aguirre expedition in 1709 explored the future site of San Antonio and named the San Pedro Springs. Fray Isidro Félix de Espinosa reported on the abundance of water that “could supply not only a village but a city which could easily be founded here…. Indeed, a “city” later grew out of the San Antonio mission and presidio (1718) and San Fernando de Béxar villa (1731).

On May 1, 1718, Franciscan Antonio de San Buenaventura y Olivares established San Antonio de Valero, one of five Spanish missions to be located along the San Antonio River. On May 5, 1718, Martín de Alarcón, governor of the province of Texas, founded San Antonio de Béxar Presidio. Initially founded
north of the present downtown area, in 1722 the presidio was relocated to the area surrounding San Antonio’s city hall, which sits on the site of Military Plaza. The fledgling community consisted of both military and civilian citizens—soldiers, Mexican frontiersmen, resident families, as well as the mission Indians. The land containing San Pedro Springs, considered as a vital water source for settlement, was declared by the Spanish crown in 1729 to be public land—a designation which makes San Pedro Springs Park one of the oldest municipal parks in the United States. The presidial captain’s house or Comandancia (later the Spanish Governor’s Palace) was completed on Military Plaza in 1749. In 1731 Canary Islanders formed the villa of San Fernando de Béxar and established the first regularly-organized civil government in Texas. From San Pedro Springs they expanded an acequia that had been started by the military settlers to serve a large area of farmland between the river and San Pedro Creek to the south. They laid out town lots and drew up plans for what became Main Plaza and the site of the San Fernando de Béxar Church. Construction for the church, which was later designated San Fernando Cathedral in 1874, was completed by the late 1750s. Over time, the Canary Islanders, whose arrival initially disrupted the existing presidio community, forged economic and family bonds within the greater community.

In 1773 San Antonio de Béxar became the capital of Spanish Texas. A census of Béxar in 1777 listed a total population of 2,060; that number included 1,351 military and civilian residents and 709 mission residents (mostly mission Indians). Its circumstances were described as "miserable" by visitors. Primarily agricultural, the population was poor and heterogeneous, made up of Europeans, mestizos, Indians, and castas (racial/ethnic groupings). Persons of mixed race, mostly identified as mulatto, included individuals of Indian/mestizo and Indian/black descent. Afro-Mexicans—people of African descent who were part of the Hispanic population of New Spain, included both free blacks and a small number of slaves. Though stone houses near the town’s center comprised some structures, most of the dwellings were jacales—mud and stick huts with thatched roofs.
In 1790 population numbers decreased to 1,878 (1,383 military and civilian residents and 495 mission residents). The San Antonio population also included fifteen black families. Secularization of the missions began in 1793 with San Antonio de Valero Mission (later known as the Alamo), which in the early 1800s became a military barracks.

In the early nineteenth century San Antonio found itself at a crossroads of conflict. Growing sentiment against Spanish rule and in favor of Mexican independence had simmered since Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla’s call for independence in Mexico in 1810 and the subsequent Casas Revolt in San Antonio in 1811. In 1813 republican forces of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition defeated Spanish royalists at the battle of Rosillo nine miles southeast of the city. The army known as the Republican Army of the North, which consisted of Anglos, Tejanos, Indians, Spanish army deserters, and former royalists, captured San Antonio on April 1, 1813, and declared independence as a republic under their “Green Flag” banner on April 6, 1813. In August the republican force of about 1,400, in the effort to spare the city, marched south to face Joaquín de Arredondo and his army, which included the young officer Antonio López de Santa Anna. The resulting battle of Medina in present-day Atascosa County on August 18, crushed the rebellion in the bloodiest battle ever fought in Texas. Arredondo enforced martial law in San Antonio. Suspected collaborators and republican sympathizers were killed or severely punished, and the city suffered the burden of an occupation army.
During the **Mexican period**, San Antonio lost its status as a provincial capital, when Texas was joined to neighboring Coahuila and the seat of government moved to far off Saltillo. San Antonio instead served as the seat of government for the Department of Texas until the early 1830s, when the state legislature created the departments of Texas and Brazos in response to population growth in Texas. In the immediate aftermath of Mexican independence, San Antonio served as the political center of the province, and its citizens actively lobbied for American immigration to support regional economic growth and Indian defense. Leading citizens of San Antonio participated in the drafting of both the **Federal Constitution of 1824** and the **Constitution of Coahuila and Texas** of 1827. Most of the city’s leading men sided with the states’ rights factions in state and national politics, and in support of continued Anglo-American immigration. When Texas finally rebelled against Santa Anna and the Centralist government in Mexico City, city leaders sided with the rebels. The only two Tejano representatives to the convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos to sign the **Texas Declaration of Independence** were both San Antonio-born as was the leading Tejano military figure on the Texan side.

San Antonio once more became the site of critical campaigns during the **Texas Revolution**, including the **siege of Bexar** from October to December 1835 in which Texan forces ultimately wrested control of the city from Mexican defenses. On February 23, 1836, Texas soldiers garrisoned in the Alamo began their fateful stand against the larger Mexican army under the command of Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna, who ordered the siege and ultimately the final assault that took place on March 6, 1836. The **battle of the Alamo**, which Alamo historian Stephen Hardin has characterized as the “most celebrated military engagement in Texas history,” immortalized San Antonio’s converted first Franciscan mission and its Texan defenders as symbols of sacrifice, and generations would recognize the rallying cry of “Remember the Alamo.”

![Painting, Dawn at the Alamo by Henry Arthur McArdle. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.](image)
Following the battle of San Jacinto and the evacuation of Mexican forces, Bexar County was organized by the Republic of Texas in December 1836, and San Antonio was chartered in January 1837 as its seat. The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas recorded a total of 339 individuals listed on the county tax rolls (which included white males over the age of twenty-one, taxable property owners and/or their agents, executors, guardians, and administrators) and a total of thirty slaves. In 1840 a failed attempt to negotiate the release of captives held by Comanche Indians resulted in the Council House Fight—yet another battle in the streets of the town. San Antonio was seized twice in the Mexican invasions of 1842. The city’s history of conflict made it one of the most fought-over cities in North America.

After Texas entered the Union, growth became rapid, as the city became a servicing and distribution center for the western movement of the United States. Beginning with the Mexican War in 1846, the United States military established a presence in San Antonio that would forge a lasting connection with the city. The headquarters of the Eighth Military Department moved to San Antonio in 1848. The Quartermaster Depot occupied the Alamo in 1849 to the early 1850s until land south of the city was purchased in 1859, and the United States Army established the San Antonio Arsenal to serve as storage for ordnance and arms to supply army troops. In 1861 local militia forced the surrender of the federal arsenal at San Antonio even before the state seceded on March 2. Subsequently, San Antonio served as a Confederate depot. Several units such as John S. Ford’s Cavalry of the West were formed there, though the city was removed from the fighting during the Civil War.

After the war, San Antonio prospered as a cattle, distribution, mercantile, and military center serving the border region and the Southwest. The city had experienced steady growth from a population of 3,488 in 1850 to 8,235 in 1860, when San Antonio had
become for the time the largest town in Texas (ahead of Galveston). Germans made up a large part of this growth; German speakers outnumbered both Tejanos and Anglos until after 1877. The city was the southern hub and supplier of the cattle trail drives, and an important wool market developed with the importation of merino sheep to the adjacent Hill Country. Railroads in Texas had a profound effect on cities, and, with the coming of the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway in 1877, San Antonio, formerly without a transportation system, entered a new era of economic growth. In 1881 a second railroad, the International-Great Northern, reached the city from the northeast, and five railroads had built into the city by 1900.

The population reached 20,550 in 1880 and increased to approximately 45,000 for the city in 1887 (with a total population for Bexar County at 47,210). The new immigration was overwhelmingly native born Anglos, mostly from Southern states, but a breakdown of nationalities in the 1887 agricultural census for the county reflected a remarkable diversity in ethnicities. The First Annual Report of the Agricultural Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, Insurance, Statistics, and History listed the following breakdown of population groups in the county: “Americans 26,061, colored [African Americans] 3395, English 606, Germans 6146, French 564, Danes 26, Hebrews 90, Irish 1022, Italians 171, Mexicans 7688, Spanish 101, Swedes 30, Norwegians 12, Poles 447, Russians 64, Chinese 19, of all other nations 745.” In 1887 the city of San Antonio had a scholastic population of 10,037, but the number of students who were actually enrolled in school was 3,594. The city had ten schools and sixty-five teachers.

Modernization was explosive in the 1880s, comparable to growth patterns across the United States. Civic government, utilities, street paving and maintenance, water supply, telephones, hospitals, and a power plant were all established or planned. By the late 1880s the city’s two periodicals (which would be longtime competitors for more than a century), the Express and the Light, were publishing daily editions. Bexar County
had 315 merchants, 100 lawyers, 32 physicians, and 9 banks. Notable industry in San Antonio in the late nineteenth century included Pioneer Flour Mills, Alamo Iron Works, Lone Star Brewery, San Antonio Brewing Association (see PEARL BREWING COMPANY), Alamo Cement Company, as well as merchandise stores such as Joske's. In 1891 the first Battle of Flowers Parade was held in the city “as a patriotic celebration to...commemorate the victory at the Battle of San Jacinto.” Through the years, the popular event evolved into the city’s annual Fiesta. Long-established in downtown were the nightly open-air chili stands where “Chili Queens” served their Mexican fare of chili con carne, tamales, enchiladas, and other cuisine at Alamo Plaza, Market Square, and other locations. The colorful festive atmosphere drew commentary from writers Stephen Crane and O. Henry.

In the late 1890s German immigrant William Gebhardt had opened a factory on West Commerce Street in the city to manufacture his own chili powder and would go on to market his product on a national scale.

Construction of a permanent army post on more than ninety-two acres located two and one-half miles northeast of the Alamo included a headquarters, a hospital, and some sixty other structures. In 1890 the post was designated Fort Sam Houston. During the Spanish-American War, the First United States Volunteer Cavalry mobilized in San Antonio and was supplied by Fort Sam Houston. Better known as the “Rough Riders,” the famed cavalry unit formed and trained in San Antonio under the direction of the unit’s celebrated recruiter and leader Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt.

San Antonio was once again the largest city in the state in 1900, with a population of 53,321. That figure ballooned to 96,614 in 1910. After 1910 Mexican immigration greatly increased due to the Mexican Revolution and the development of local service industries. The Spanish-language newspaper La Prensa was founded in 1913 and went daily in 1914. The periodical kept readers abreast of events in Mexico,
covered Mexican politics, and provided announcements for area Mexican and **Mexican American organizations**. The confluence of Hispanic, German, and Southern Anglo American cultures in San Antonio made it into one of America's "four unique cities" (along with Boston, New Orleans, and San Francisco). **Frederick Law Olmsted** had remarked on the city’s “jumble of races, costumes, languages and buildings” as early as the 1850s. Each successive group of immigrants put its stamp upon the city, its culture, and architecture; all mingled, none quite submerging the others. Each period of growth produced characteristic and often distinguished architecture. Peculiarly, San Antonio succeeded in merging its past into the new in each generation. Old Spanish walls remain beside modern glass towers, with rows of Victorian mansions a block away, a combination that contributed to the city’s charm and attracted millions of visitors. Perhaps no preservation effort would be as significant and defining for the city (and millions of tourists) as the work to save the Alamo. The state of Texas purchased the Alamo from the **Catholic Church** in 1883—an action that marked the first time that a structure was purchased for the sake of historic preservation in the United States west of the Mississippi. Two decades later in the early 1900s, members of the **Daughters of the Republic of Texas** worked to expand the Alamo property and eventually assumed stewardship of the complex. The site would remain San Antonio’s most recognizable landmark.

The Germans particularly brought cultural traditions in the form of music, the arts, and architecture to San Antonio. A German men’s chorus that had begun as early as the 1840s developed into the **Beethoven Männerchor**. German musicians formed an orchestra for the state Saengerfest, held in San Antonio in 1874, and were instrumental in the formation of symphony orchestras in the city in the early 1900s, though the **San Antonio Symphony Orchestra** was not formally established until 1939. During the late nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, many of the prominent German families built residences in the **King William Historic District** which became known for its fine Victorian homes.
In the 1910s San Antonio began its long historical association with the advancement of **aviation**. In 1910 the U. S. Army’s only airplane arrived at Fort Sam Houston with Lt. Benjamin Foulois. On March 2, 1910, his first solo flight there marked the “birth of military aviation.” In 1915 aviatrix **Katherine Stinson** and her family opened the Stinson School of Flying on land just south of town. Young Stinson, who was the fourth American woman to earn her pilot’s license, awed crowds across the nation with her aerial stunts and was the first woman to master the loop-the-loop, authorized to deliver U. S. airmail, and fly at night. Her sister Marjorie, also an instructor at the school, was the first pilot to deliver mail by air in Texas. Stinson Field became the Alamo City’s first airport and one hundred years later still operated as the second oldest general aviation airport in continual operation in the nation and the oldest west of the Mississippi. In 1916 Capt. Benjamin Foulois selected the site of **Kelly Field** to expand upon the new Aviation Section of the United States Army Signal Corps at Fort Sam Houston. The base, named for Lt. George E. Kelly, who was killed in a crash at Fort Sam in 1911 and was the first U. S. military aviator to perish in a military aircraft, rapidly increased in its importance with America’s entry into **World War I**, and more World War I aviators earned their wings there than any other field in the United States. (One San Antonio native and World War I ace, **Edgar Tobin**, went on to establish a pioneering aerial surveying firm in the city.) An instructor training facility that soon became known as **Brooks Field** opened in 1917. A balloon and airship school followed at the facility. As a result of the war, the army expanded its military footprint in San Antonio as the site of **Camp Travis** (originally named Camp Wilson) for the training of the **Ninetieth Division**. The army also leased additional land adjacent to the already-established **Leon Springs Military Reservation** to establish **Camp Bullis** and **Camp Stanley** in 1917.
Interestingly, San Antonio’s army and air fields, provided attractive settings for the growing motion picture industry of the early 1900s, when a number of production companies (both locally-established and from outside of the state) operated in the city. The military facilities served as backdrops for several films, including *The Big Parade* (1925), *The Rough Riders* (1927), and *Wings* (1927), which won Best Picture at the inaugural Academy Awards ceremony (see FILM INDUSTRY).

In 1920 San Antonio, still the largest city in Texas, had a population of 161,379. On September 9–10, 1921, San Antonio suffered one of its greatest disasters in history—a devastating flood that inundated downtown with up to twelve feet of water in some areas. A massive wall of water swept through the streets and tore through structures, including city hall, police headquarters, and hospitals. At least fifty-one people died and others were missing. The 1921 catastrophe remains the worst flood on record in terms of loss of life and property and prompted city officials to pursue flood control measures. In 1926 Olmos Dam on Olmos Creek was completed for flood control, especially for the downtown region (though the poorer West Side neighborhoods would still wait decades for effective flood control measures). Flood waters were also diverted from the Great Bend of the San Antonio River, with floodgates installed at each end of the bend. The bypass channel was finished in 1930. A major ultimate consequence of the great 1921 flood and ensuing flood control measures was the safe development of the downtown river bend into an area of shops, restaurants, and pedestrian walkways and bridges originally envisioned by architect Robert Hugman in 1929. The *San Antonio River Walk* was completed in 1941.

Downtown San Antonio after the devastating 1921 flood. Courtesy of the General Photograph Collection at the University of Texas at San Antonio.
The city’s first radio station, **WOAI**, went on the air in 1922 and was touted as one of the “first super powered stations in Texas.” WOAI entertained listeners with a variety of musical and informative programming. Popular western swing groups, Mexican songs, and soap operas filled the airwaves. The station’s focus on news coverage eventually led, in the late 1930s, to the hiring of Henry Guerra, a young news reporter who became the first Mexican American to broadcast news over a major radio station. The studio at WOAI also served as a recording facility for a number of labels that traveled to the Alamo City in search of talent. In the 1920s and 1930s San Antonio was a major Texas destination for such record labels as Victor, Bluebird, OKeh, Columbia, American Record Corporation, Decca, and others who sought out artists for field recordings. Tejana singers such as **Lydia Mendoza** and her family were recorded numerous times. Conjunto pioneers **Santiago Jiménez, Sr., Narciso Martínez**, and others showcased their developing genre. San Antonio offered country and western swing musicians such as the **Tune Wranglers**; the polka and western swing blend of **Adolph Hofner**; the jazz of **Troy Floyd**, whose orchestra included such notables as saxophonist **Herschel Evans** and trumpeter **Don Albert**; and many others. Record labels also conducted field recordings at such locales as banquet halls, churches, office buildings, and hotel rooms. A pivotal event in the history of the recording industry in San Antonio, for example, took place at the Gunter Hotel with Vocalion’s first recording sessions of blues legend **Robert Johnson** in 1936.

In addition to the city’s evolving musical expressions of the 1920s and 1930s, was the growing awareness of the visual arts and architecture of the city. The **San Antonio Conservation Society** organized in 1924 and began its mission to protect many of the city’s historic buildings, including the missions, and the society’s focus extended to photographs and other archival materials, art, street names, natural scenery—all elements of “cultural conservation.” The **San Antonio Museum Association** chartered in 1925 and helped open the **Witte Memorial Museum** in 1926. The **San Antonio Art League** also partnered with the Witte, and from that alliance eventually emerged the **San Antonio Museum of Art**. In 1926 the city’s Municipal Auditorium,
designed by famed architect Atlee Ayres in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, was built. Ayres and his son Robert also designed the villa of Jessie Marion Koogler McNay, and construction of the residence that in later decades housed the McNay Art Museum began in 1927. Two architectural and artistic design jewels—the Aztec Theatre and Majestic Theatre—opened in the city in 1926 and 1929, respectively, for movies, musical performances, vaudeville acts, and other entertainment. At its opening, the Majestic touted its status as the largest movie house in the South and first fully air-conditioned theater in the state.

San Antonio already promoted itself as a tourist destination and convenient headquarters for exploring motorists. The San Antonio Express boasted in 1929 that Bexar County had the “largest mileage of improved roads of any County in the United States” and “more than 150 motor buses” operated daily from the city to other regions. The San Antonio-Austin Post Road (first completed in 1916 and known as Highway No. 2, an early forerunner to Interstate 35) served as a main artery for motorists. San Antonio’s many attractions in 1929 included its new zoo built at a former rock quarry adjacent to Brackenridge Park, one of the city’s popular scenic parks (opened in 1899). Nearby, visitors could enjoy the Japanese Tea Garden.

During the Great Depression, however, San Antonio experienced a period of slower growth as compared to some other major Texas cities. Its population of 231,542 fell
behind Houston and Dallas; the city remained the third largest city in Texas through the 2000 census. Several key events during the 1930s shed light on the hardships of the Mexican workforce in the city. Most notably, the Pecan Shellers’ Strike against the Southern Pecan Shelling Company in 1938 drew national attention to the poor working conditions associated with one of the city’s largest industries—the processing of pecans. Led by native San Antonian and labor and civil rights activist Emma Tenayuca, who had also participated in a strike against the H. W. Finck Cigar Company in 1933, more than 10,000 workers (mostly women) went on a three-month strike against Southern Pecan Shelling Company. Though both sides later arbitrated a settlement and a federal minimum wage established a higher rate of pay, the company soon mechanized its operations, thereby displacing the workforce.

During the 1930s poor living conditions on San Antonio’s predominantly Mexican American West Side came to the attention of Fr. Carmelo Tranchese, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Tranchese championed programs to improve health and housing on the West Side, especially in his capacity as one of the members of the new San Antonio Housing Authority in 1937. By the early 1940s the city had its first housing projects, including the Alazan-Apache Courts.

San Antonio did not expand beyond its original Spanish charter land until 1940. The area was large enough to allow a number of incorporated suburbs within the metropolitan area, but the city soon went beyond these. Like most twentieth-century American cities in the automobile age, its expansion was mainly horizontal, with sprawling neighborhoods but little vertical building. Although the first Texas skyscraper and several tall buildings were built in San Antonio in the early twentieth
century, vertical construction did not continue, and the city's center of population steadily moved northward. In 1941 the city purchased 1,200 acres north of the city limits to develop an airport, and what initially opened as a military training facility later became San Antonio International Airport. That same year, oilman and philanthropist Thomas Slick, Jr., founded the Foundation of Applied Research (see Texas Biomedical Research Institute) on a ranch west of town, and he established Southwest Research Institute there six years later.

World War II further defined and underscored the importance of the military and its economic impact on San Antonio as well as the city’s role as a vital military hub to the nation. Fort Sam Houston and airfields Kelly, Brooks, Randolph (which had opened in 1930), and Lackland (which was separated from Kelly Field early in the war) provided critical personnel training and brought a new generation of young recruits from across the United States. Many returned to live in San Antonio after their service. With the separation of the United States Air Force from the army after the war, Kelly Air Force Base, Brooks Air Force Base, Randolph Air Force Base, and Lackland Air Force Base (to be known as the “Gateway to the Air Force”) contributed materially to the economic base of the Alamo City and would continue to do so through the twentieth century and beyond. Additionally, Brooke Army Medical Center became the “home of Army Medicine” and the army’s key facility for surgical research, medical field service instruction, long-term rehabilitation and recovery care, and other operations.

San Antonio’s population boomed during the wartime and post-war years from 253,854 in 1940 to 408,442 in 1950 and to 587,718 in 1960. The city’s transportation
system was boosted by the completion of much of Interstate Highway 35 by the late 1950s. WOAI-TV signed on in 1949 as the city’s first television station. KEYL-TV (present-day KENS) followed suit in 1950, and KONO-TV (present-day KSAT-TV) began in 1957. Raoul Cortez, owner of the city’s first Spanish-language radio station with KCOR in 1946, launched the nation’s first Spanish-language television station with KCOR-TV in 1955.

Until 1955 the city government followed the classic mayor-alderman pattern, in which appeared a number of colorful mayors, lively elections, and no little corruption. In 1955 San Antonio opted for the council-manager form. Native son Henry B. González was the first Mexican American elected to the city council (in 1953). He championed civil rights and spoke out against segregation while on the council. González was later elected to the state senate and eventually was the first Tejano elected to the U. S. House of Representatives. As was the case for other Texas cities, the fight for civil rights transformed San Antonio into a broader-based electorate.

During the struggle for desegregation, San Antonio did not experience the violence that characterized the fight for civil rights in some other cities, especially in the Deep South. Scholars have identified several mitigating factors that diffused some of the turmoil. Though segregation was a long-standing norm for citizens in San Antonio, the city’s public accommodations had been “open to Mexican Americans since the 1940s.” The African American community largely resided on the city’s East Side and constituted a small percentage of the population. In 1960, while Mexican Americans made up approximately 40 percent of San Antonio’s population, African Americans constituted just 7 percent. Certain major segments of the city had already enacted desegregation. The U. S. military had begun the process of integration by the late 1940s. The Catholic Church condemned prejudice and integrated all parochial schools and its colleges in the city in 1954 (just prior to the U. S. Supreme Court’s historic decision in Brown v. Board of Education). Many city officials, clergy, and traditional black leaders moved along a course of voluntary desegregation in stages, though pending litigation by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) prompted the city to desegregate such facilities as municipal parks and golf courses in 1954 and swimming pools, buses, and train stations in 1956. In addition to the Catholic Church, support came from other members of the clergy. San Antonio’s black newspaper, the San Antonio Register, owned by Valmo Charles Bellinger, kept readers informed regarding civil
rights issues. His father, **Charles Bellinger**, had been an African American political leader in San Antonio going back to the late 1910s. Until his death in 1937, Charles Bellinger had delivered black votes to the city’s political machine in exchange for municipal projects and other improvements on the East Side. But a new generation of African American activists began to reject this paternalistic tradition.

On March 16, 1960, San Antonio became the first major city in the South to integrate its lunch counters. Soon after, the San Antonio Interracial Committee formed and sent delegations to various public establishments in the attempt to convince them to voluntarily integrate. City leaders approached the enactment of increased civil rights from an economic perspective and the effort to avoid conflict, generally with the cooperation and input of traditional black leadership. This “policy of gradualism and control undercut black activists who sought to accelerate the pace of desegregation.” One exception to this gradualism came with the protest sit-ins waged against the Joske’s department store, when the business opened its basement café but did not open its two exclusive restaurants to African Americans. The resulting months of protests as well as meetings with the Interracial Committee eventually succeeded in the store’s change in policy. Finally, after the years of voluntary desegregation in the city, the city council unanimously approved desegregation of all public accommodations on November 11, 1965. That same year Rev. Samuel H. James became the first African American to win a council seat in San Antonio; he was the first black to do so in a major Texas city.

Interestingly, beginning in the 1950s and early 1960s, an organic integration in the city manifested itself through the collaboration of racial and ethnic groups—Tejanos, African Americans, and Anglos—in a unique intercultural musical genre that became known as the **West Side Sound**. Young artists came together at night spots (such as the **Eastwood Country Club**) and house parties and combined elements of **rock-and-roll**, rhythm-and-blues, country, and conjunto to create a new sound that has
resonated beyond the city and into the twenty-first century. Notable groups included Sunny and the Sunglows (later known as Sunny and the Sunliners)—the first all-Tejano band to appear on Dick Clark’s American Bandstand, in 1963, to promote their national hit “Talk to Me.” Two years later San Antonians Doug Sahm, Augie Meyers, Frank Morin, Jack Barber, and Johnny Perez as Sir Douglas Quintet scored a national hit with “She’s About a Mover.”

The city dramatically increased its profile to the world as the site of an international exposition—HemisFair ’68. Development for this world’s fair, which took place from April 6 through October 6, 1968, included construction of the Institute of Texan Cultures, a convention center complex, and the 622-foot Tower of the Americas, which became an iconic feature of the San Antonio skyline. The San Antonio River Walk was extended and new restaurants and shops opened along the walk along with new hotels, including the Hilton Palacio del Rio and La Mansion del Rio. More than ever before, officials focused on enhancing the city’s reputation as a tourist destination. The grounds of HemisFair subsequently served various other festivals and cultural events, including the Texas Folklife Festival which began in 1972.


Population increased steadily from 654,153 in 1970 to 785,410 in 1980. With this steady growth throughout the late twentieth century, San Antonio wrestled with a major issue—its water supply. With the first artesian wells drilled in the late 1880s, throughout the twentieth century the Edwards Aquifer provided the city’s sole source of water, and San Antonio was the largest city in the United States to rely solely on groundwater. Because the aquifer acts as a natural filter and requires no treatment other than chlorination before distribution, its use has provided enormous cost benefits. In addition to the city’s municipal use, the aquifer has been vital for irrigation for counties west of the city and supports the steady
flow of area springs. With San Antonio’s exploding population and sprawl by the late twentieth century, city and state officials, conservationists, businesses, and others studied the complicated issues of protection against pollutants and contaminated runoff, maintenance of the flow of regional springs (specifically the Comal Springs and San Marcos Springs) and preservation of endangered species, restriction of development over the recharge zone of the aquifer, and water use restrictions and other conservation measures, while still promoting commerce and a high quality of life. By the late 1980s San Antonio worked with the Edwards Underground Water District to develop the area’s first regional water study. In 1995 the city furnished the first guidelines and restrictions regarding development over the recharge zone. Area water authorities also explored the possibility of the development of surface water sources as well as the process of desalination of brackish groundwater. In the 2000s voters approved multiple sales tax hikes to raise funds to purchase undeveloped land in the Edwards recharge zone for the purpose of conservation. San Antonio also built a recycled water distribution system and the Twin Oaks Aquifer Storage and Recovery facility. In 2018 other water sources included Medina Lake, Lake Dunlap, the Trinity Aquifer, and Carrizo Aquifer. Construction of the Vista Ridge Pipeline to pump and carry water from the Carrizo/Simsboro Aquifer in Burleson County was underway and slated for completion in 2020. The city maintained specific year-round guidelines regarding certain residential and commercial water use, and landscape watering was allowed only before 11 a.m. and after 7 p.m.

Although the lack of high paying manufacturing and finance-industry jobs kept San Antonio in the bottom tier of average metropolitan income, the city developed a viable economy from its stable military bases, educational institutions, tourism, and its medical-research complex. The major Texas grocery chain, H-E-B, purchased ten acres and some of the buildings on the old grounds of the San Antonio Arsenal in 1982, and, after extensive renovations, relocated its corporate headquarters there in 1985. Major development along the River Walk continued with the construction of Rivercenter Mall in 1987. The following year Sea World opened on a 250-acre tract on the west side of the city as the largest marine-life theme park in the world at the time. Another major amusement park, Six Flags Fiesta Texas opened in 1992.

In September 1987 Pope John Paul II made a historic visit to the Alamo City as part of a nine-city American tour and celebrated Mass with more than 350,000 people. The event still stands as the largest single event in Texas and underscored the city’s
deep-rooted heritage in the Catholic Church. Historical milestones for the church in the city included developments in the fields of education and health. The Catholic Church had opened a school—**Ursuline Academy** (a girls’ school)—in the city as early as 1851. In 1869 the **Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word** opened the first public hospital, Santa Rosa Infirmary, in San Antonio; their efforts launched what eventually grew into the **CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System**. San Antonio was raised to a Catholic diocese in 1874 and an **archdiocese** in 1926. Churches of all denominations have played an enormous role culturally, spiritually, and architecturally in the city, and by the late twentieth century religious groups also included numerous Protestant denominations, Mormons, Quakers, Jews, Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists.

During the 1990s military budget cuts and the consolidation of bases posed the greatest threat to date for San Antonio’s stable military community and its economic impact on the city. In 1993 the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommended closure for Kelly Air Force Base, but the mobilization of local support for the base temporarily saved it from closing. BRAC again decided in favor of closure for Kelly, as well as Brooks Air Force Base, in 1995. The loss of Kelly, for a number of years the largest single employer in the city and home to generations of workers, was seen as a tough blow for San Antonio’s military community and general workforce. Nearby Lackland assumed responsibility for some Kelly holdings and operations. Kelly Air Force Base was officially inactivated on July 13, 2001. Brooks ultimately closed on September 15, 2011, and developers planned a mixed-use community on the former base. In the years leading up to the base closures, the Department of Defense with city leaders promoted a new initiative of privatization. The city council created the San Antonio Port Authority. Upon closure, Kelly Air Force Base became KellyUSA with a targeted mission to become an inland port. In 2007 KellyUSA became Port San Antonio, and a new 89,600-square-foot air cargo terminal opened in 2008. Under the ownership of Port San Antonio, the former base has since had more than eighty public and private-sector tenants (as of 2017) and employed more than 12,000 workers.
The remaining military bases—Fort Sam Houston, Randolph Air Force Base, and Lackland Air Force Base—were consolidated into a joint base, in accordance with the recommendation of the 2005 BRAC and subsequent legislation. Thus Joint Base San Antonio, the largest of the U. S. military’s joint bases, was born and achieved full operating capability on October 1, 2010.

San Antonio had a population of 1,144,646 in 2000. That figure grew to 1,327,407 for the 2010 census; 63.2 percent were Hispanic, 26.6 percent were Anglo, 6.9 percent were African Americans, and 6.9 percent were classified “other” ethnicities. San Antonio moved ahead of Dallas as the second most populous city in Texas. Significant business gains in the city included the groundbreaking for a Toyota assembly plant in 2003. Valero Energy Corporation opened its new corporate headquarters in 2004. The city’s more than 41,000 businesses in the 2010s also included Holt Cat, AT&T, iHeartMedia (the former Clear Channel Communications international media company, originally founded in 1972 by Lowry Mays and Red McCombs), and Frost Bank. The twenty-three-story Frost Tower, the first new skyscraper added to San Antonio’s skyline in thirty years, was scheduled to open in 2019.

The city’s educational facilities in the 2010s included University of the Incarnate Word (originally established by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in 1893), Our Lady of the Lake University (originally established as a girls academy by the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1895), St. Mary’s University (which developed out of Marianists’ educational efforts beginning in 1852), the Alamo Colleges District (comprised of St. Philip’s College [established in 1898], San Antonio College [established in 1925], Palo Alto College [established in 1985], Northwest Vista College [established in 1995], and Northeast Lakeview College [established in 2007]), Trinity University (which moved to San Antonio in 1942), University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (which instructed the first students in 1966), University of Texas at San Antonio (founded in 1969 and the largest university in the San Antonio metropolitan area), and Texas A&M University-San Antonio (the city’s newest university established as a stand-alone campus in 2008). Bexar County had seventeen independent public school districts, more than seventy charter schools, and
In sports, the Alamo City has had a long connection with minor league baseball and was one of the charter members of the Texas League going back to 1888. The San Antonio Missions, a Double-A affiliate of the San Diego Padres, played in Nelson W. Wolff Municipal Stadium in 2018. As of 2019 San Antonio was scheduled to move up to Triple-A baseball, with possible future plans for a new ballpark downtown. The Valero Texas Open golf tournament first took place in 1922 and is one of the oldest PGA Tour tournaments in North America and the oldest to have been held in the same city for its entire existence. Motorsports in and around the city have taken place at a variety of venues, including dirt tracks, quarter-mile paved ovals, and drag strips. Notably, “Smokin’ Alamo Dragway operated from 1974 to 2004. The half-mile oval San Antonio Speedway was open from 1977 to 2007. The city also hosted the Alamo Grand Prix, an International Motor Sports Association-sanctioned event in 1989. San Antonio opened its own domed stadium, the Alamodome, in 1993 in the hope of attracting an NFL franchise. Though no NFL team permanently relocated to the city, the stadium has hosted major sporting events such as the annual Alamo Bowl college football game, competitions of the U.S. Olympic Festival which took place in the Alamo City in 1993, two women’s NCAA Final Four basketball tournaments, and four men’s NCAA Final Four basketball tournaments (the most recent being 2018). No team, however, has been as heralded as the San Antonio Spurs. The NBA team first arrived (as part of the American Basketball Association [ABA]) in the city in 1973 and built a loyal fan base and a history of success. In the 2010s the Spurs had won five championships and were recognized as one of the winningest franchises in North American sports. As of 2018 the Spurs had amassed a staggering twenty-one consecutive winning seasons (an NBA
record) and twenty-one consecutive playoffs appearances. The team played at the AT&T Center, which opened (as the SBC Center) in 2002. As a model organization and pioneer in the scouting and recruiting of international players, the team also garnered international fans. Spurs Sports & Entertainment also owned the San Antonio Rampage (an American Hockey League team), and San Antonio FC (a United Soccer League team which debuted in 2016 and played at Toyota Field, the city’s new soccer stadium which opened in 2013). The San Antonio Silver Stars (later shortened to Stars) of the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA) played in San Antonio from 2003 to 2017.

In the early twenty-first century San Antonio moved forward as a major cosmopolitan city and tourist destination. The city offered a host of diverse attractions, including La Villita; the Buckhorn Saloon; San Antonio Botanical Garden; art, history, and military museums; numerous shopping malls; parks; and restaurants. Two major extensions enhanced the River Walk—the Museum Reach, which extended into the museum district and renovated Pearl District in 2009, and the Mission Reach, which stretched some eight miles to the San Antonio Missions in 2013. The new Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, a major architectural project and renovation using the city’s old Municipal Auditorium, opened in 2014. In 2015 the Alamo and the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (which had been so designated in 1978) became a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—the first such designation in Texas. Morgan’s Wonderland, the first theme park designed for special-needs individuals in the world, opened in 2010. The park opened Morgan’s Inspiration Island, the first splash park designed for people with special needs, in 2017. In addition to Fiesta in San Antonio, annual events included the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo, the Holiday River Parade and Christmas lighting of the River Walk, the reenactment of the Passion of
the Christ on Good Friday, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., March (one of the largest in the nation).

By 2018 H-E-B was the largest employer in San Antonio. Longtime insurance company USAA came in second. Other major employers included the city of San Antonio, Methodist Healthcare System, University Health System, and several independent school districts. The San Antonio Express-News functioned as the city’s daily newspaper. San Antonio had eight television stations, fourteen FM and twelve AM radio stations. The year 2018 marked the Tricentennial of San Antonio, and various celebrations and exhibits commemorated the city’s rich heritage.
San Antonio de Valero Mission (originally referred to as San Antonio de Padua) was authorized by the viceroy of Mexico in 1716. Fray Antonio de Olivares, who brought with him Indian converts and the records from San Francisco Solano Mission near San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande, established the mission at the site of present-day San Antonio on May 1, 1718, and named it San Antonio de Valero in honor of Saint Anthony de Padua and the Duke of Valero, the Spanish viceroy. After a hurricane destroyed most of the existing buildings, the mission moved to its present site in 1724; the cornerstone of the chapel was laid on May 8, 1744. The original chapel suffered a structural collapse in the mid-1750s. Reconstruction efforts began in earnest in 1758 but were never completed. Founded for the purpose of Christianizing and educating the Indians, the mission later became a fortress and was the scene of many conflicts prior to the siege of 1836. Its activity as a mission began to wane after 1765, and it was secularized in 1793, and the archives were removed to nearby San Fernando Church.

In 1803 the Second Flying Company of San Carlos de Parras, a company of Spanish soldiers from Álamo de Parras, Coahuila, Mexico, occupied the abandoned
mission, using its buildings as barracks for a number of years. From this association probably originated the name Alamo.

According to some historians, the name derived from a grove of cottonwood trees growing on the banks of the acequia. Alamo was the Spanish word for "cottonwood." Spanish and Mexican forces occupied the Alamo almost continuously from 1803 to December 1835, when Gen. Martín Perfecto de Cos surrendered the fortress to Texan forces.

On February 23, 1836, Mexican forces under the command of Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna besieged Col. William B. Travis and his Texas garrison in the Alamo. The siege of the Alamo lasted thirteen days and ended on March 6 with a complete loss of all the combatant Texans (see ALAMO, BATTLE OF THE).
After the fall of the Alamo, the building was practically in ruins, but no attempt was made at that time to restore it. The Republic of Texas, on January 18, 1841, passed an act returning the chapel of the Alamo to the Catholic Church. After Texas was annexed to the United States, the Alamo was declared property of the United States government. During the Mexican War the United States Army occupied the building and grounds and until the Civil War used them for quartermaster purposes. For some time the city of San Antonio, the Catholic Church, and the United States government all claimed the Alamo. The United States government finally agreed to lease the property from the Catholic Church and made some improvements. These included a new roof for the chapel and convent (also known as the Long Barrack), repairs to the chapel’s stone walls, and the addition of the chapel’s iconic arched gable. An 1855 court decision later reaffirmed the Catholic Church’s rightful ownership of the structure. During the Civil War the Confederates used the building, but after the close of the war the United States government again took over and used it until 1877, when quartermaster operations moved to the permanent army post that was eventually designated Fort Sam Houston. In the ensuing decades, much of what remained of the original Alamo site, including the remnants of the outer walls and central courtyard, was consumed by the development of Alamo Plaza and the construction of new city streets and businesses. By the late 1880s, the only original elements still standing were the Long Barrack and the iconic chapel. In 1877 the Catholic Church sold the Long Barrack to French merchant Henri Grenet, who remodeled it to house a general store. Grenet also leased the chapel
A controversy over custody of the Alamo developed almost immediately between the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and the De Zavala chapter of that organization at San Antonio. The disagreement revolved around the disposition of the Long Barrack—while one faction sought to demolish much of the structure to make way for a public park, another proposed that it should be restored to its original appearance. The resulting legal battle drew the involvement of Governor O. B. Colquitt, who agreed that the Long Barrack should be fully restored and temporarily suspended the DRT’s custody of the property. In 1912 the Fourth Court of Civil Appeals resolved the matter and reinstated the DRT’s custodial rights. Ultimately, the DRT decided to demolish the second floor of the Long Barrack and reconstruct the walls of the first floor between 1913 and 1916. Public exhibits to draw visitors and tourists to the site began about 1915. In 1921 construction crews added a new concrete, barrel-vaulted roof to the chapel to replace the wooden roof constructed by the U.S. Army, and installed electric lighting.
Several appropriations for funds to improve the Alamo have been made, the largest being in connection with the celebration of the Texas Centennial. Between 1925 and 1937 a combination of federal, state, municipal, and private funds were used to purchase and consolidate surrounding properties for the expansion of Alamo Plaza and creation of a museum complex. Beautification efforts included new landscaping on Alamo Plaza and the construction of an enclosed garden to the east of the chapel. Within the enclosed space the construction of several new structures included a restored section of acequia, the Alamo Museum (later converted into a gift shop), the Arcade (a Works Progress Administration project that since 1997 has housed the “Wall of History”), and Alamo Hall (a remodeled fire station deeded by the city of San Antonio in 1938 that as of 2018 served as an event venue). The chapel also received a new flagstone floor and a new outer roof of copper and lead over the north rooms. The 1930s expansion effort culminated with the installation of the Alamo Cenotaph, sculpted by renowned artist Pompeo Coppini and formally dedicated in November 1940. Post-1940 additions include the construction of the DRT Library in 1950 and the installment of a museum in the Long Barrack in preparation for HemisFair ’68. An outdoor amphitheater was added to the Alamo gardens in 1997.

Today the 4.2-acre Alamo complex is considered one of the most popular tourist destinations in the state of Texas and has received designations as a National Historic Landmark (1960), a Texas Historic Landmark (1962), and a Texas State Antiquities Landmark (1983). In 1966 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and in 1977 it was included in the NRHP’s newly-designated Alamo Plaza Historic District. On July 5, 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared the Alamo and the missions of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park a World Heritage Site—the first such designation in Texas.
The Alamo complex remained in the custody of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas until 2011, when the Texas legislature transferred this authority to the **General Land Office** (GLO), which contracted the DRT to continue overseeing day-to-day operations. In 2012 the private, nonprofit Alamo Endowment was established to assist the GLO with fundraising, preservation, maintenance, and long-term planning for several much-needed physical improvement projects. From 2011 to 2017 these included renovations to the Alamo chapel, the Long Barrack Museum, the Alamo Museum and gift shop, Alamo Hall, and the DRT Library (later renamed the Alamo Research Center). In 2015 the GLO terminated its contract with the DRT and transferred responsibility for daily operations to Alamo Complex Management (later renamed the Alamo Trust), a subsidiary of the Alamo Endowment. Also in 2015 the state legislature approved the first of two appropriations totaling more than $106 million to fund ongoing improvements. In 2017 the GLO, Alamo Endowment, and city of San Antonio unveiled a joint master plan that would significantly redevelop much of the existing Alamo complex and Alamo Plaza Historic District. In addition to continued preservation of the Alamo chapel and Long Barrack, the ambitious plan proposed relocating nearby entertainment venues, restricting vehicle traffic, construction of a 135,000-square-foot visitor center and museum, and archaeological excavations to reveal long-buried remains of the original mission structures. Some elements of the plan, including a controversial proposal to relocate the Alamo Cenotaph, were still under consideration as of 2018.

**Proposed renovations to the Alamo Plaza. Courtesy of the Alamo Master Plan Management Committee.**
On February 14, 1719, the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo made a report to the king of Spain proposing that 400 families be transported from the Canary Islands, Galicia, or Havana to populate the province of Texas. His plan was approved, and notice was given the Canary Islanders to furnish 200 families; the Council of the Indies suggested that 400 families should be sent from the Canaries to Texas by way of Havana and Veracruz. By June 1730, twenty-five families had reached Cuba, and ten families had been sent on to Veracruz before orders from Spain to stop the movement arrived.

Under the leadership of Juan Leal Goraz, the group marched overland to the presidio of San Antonio de Bexar, where they arrived on March 9, 1731. The party had increased by marriages on the way to fifteen families, and four unmarried men constituted a sixteenth “family,” making a total of fifty-six persons. They joined a military and civilian community that had been in existence since 1718. The immigrants formed the nucleus of the villa of San Fernando de Béxar, the first regularly organized civil government in Texas, and on August 1, 1731, elected Goraz as first alcalde.
The arrival of the Canary Islanders disrupted the existing presidio community of Mexican frontiersmen, soldiers, and resident families—especially regarding land and water ownership. Soon after their arrival, the single men joined the presidio service while others forged family and business bonds with the existing population. As Old World farmers, all of them had to be trained in the arts of frontier living. In time, Canary Islander status became a point of pride in much of San Antonio’s population. María Rosa Padrón was the first baby born in San Antonio of known Canary Islander descent.

A number of the old families of San Antonio trace their descent from the Canary Island colonists. In 1971 a Texas Historical Marker honoring the Canary Islanders and their role in the development of San Antonio was erected on the Main Plaza of San Antonio. By the late 1970s the Canary Islands Descendants Association was established to promote the history, preservation of documents, and fostering of education about the Canary Islanders, the sixteen original families, and their legacy.
Juan Leal Goraz, Spanish colonizer of Texas, was born in 1676 on the island of Lancerote in the Canary Islands to Antonio Goraz and María Pérez. He led the colonization of the Villa de San Fernando (San Antonio) by Canary Islanders and later became the city's first mayor. In March 1730 a handful of emigrants gathered in the port of Santa Cruz, Teneriffe, in response to a royal decree calling for colonists to settle in Texas. As an inducement the crown agreed to provide the colonists transportation and a generous subsistence for a year. A colonial judge appointed the oldest male among them, Leal Goraz, as their leader. When the colonists arrived at Veracruz in the early part of June, the Mexican viceroy reaffirmed Leal's leadership. Many of those who traveled with him were weakened by the rigors of the journey. Among these, Lucia Hernández, Goraz's wife and mother of his five children, became ill and died. Sixteen families arrived near the Béxar Presidio on March 9, 1731, and immediately staked out their new community, the Villa de San Fernando. The king granted in perpetuity, to each of the colonists and their heirs, the noble title of Hidalgo ("person of noble lineage"). Unfortunately, with the title came a degree of arrogance and intolerance toward the region's established population.

Under Leal's leadership, the colonists twice petitioned the viceroy to conscript the mission Indians to work their lands. They further insisted that the missionaries keep to their ecclesiastical duties and be prohibited from trade or agricultural expansion because the latter was not their calling and was prejudicial to the colonists. The viceroy declined both petitions. In 1735, Leal was appointed regidor de cano, or councilman, to the villa. From the council he was later appointed for life as first alcalde. His leadership was seldom tempered with wisdom or tolerance, however, a fact that quickly won him enemies among the military, the clergy, and even his fellow colonists.
Records of the arriving settlers described Leal as "tall, long faced, blind in the left eye, with thick black beard and hair, dark complexion, sharp nose, and light gray eyes." Though reasonably intelligent and moderately literate, he was plagued with nearsightedness in his remaining eye, which restricted him greatly in his public duties. He boastfully referred to himself as "Spaniard," "principal settler," "regidor for his majesty," and various other titles accorded to him. Still, most looked upon Leal as a small farmer and petty justice of a minor settlement. His inflated sense of pride was shared by his fellow colonists, as demonstrated in their childish, continual, and often impertinent demands to the viceroy.

Leal married María Melano, the widow of Lucas Delgado. Of his children, Juan Leal Goraz, Jr., Bernardo Leal, and Catrina Leal, with their spouses and children, constituted three of the original sixteen Canary Island families. Leal died in the Villa de San Fernando in March 1743 and was buried near what is now San Fernando Cathedral in San Antonio.
The battle of Medina was fought on August 18, 1813, between the republican forces of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition under Gen. José Álvarez de Toledo y Dubois and a Spanish royalist army under Gen. Joaquín de Arredondo. This bloodiest battle ever fought on Texas soil took place twenty miles south of San Antonio in a sandy oak forest region then called el encinal de Medina. Occurring during a very confused and turbulent period of world history, the battle of Medina affected the destinies of Spain, Mexico, the United States, England, and France. Mexico and Latin America were in revolt against Spain, whose king was Joseph Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon, who was on a rampage in Europe, and the United States was at war with England, later to be called the War of 1812. In this cauldron of world events, José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara and Augustus William Magee, abetted by the United States, organized an expedition to wrest Texas from Spain. Adopting a "Green Flag" for a banner, their Republican Army of the North crossed from the Neutral Ground in Louisiana into Texas on August 7, 1812, and soon captured Nacogdoches, Trinidad de Salcedo, La Bahía, where Magee died, and San Antonio, where a declaration of independence for the State of Texas under the Republic of Mexico was proclaimed on April 6, 1813. This, however, was short-lived, for Joaquín de Arredondo, commandant-general of the Provincias Internas, organized an army of 1,830 men and marched them early in August from Laredo toward San Antonio to quell the rebellion. In the meantime, Toledo deposed Gutiérrez and became the new commander of the republicans on August 4.
With a force of about 1,400 men composed of Anglos, Tejanos, Indians, and former royalists, Toledo, urged by Tejanos who wanted to spare San Antonio from the ravages of battle, chose to meet the enemy south of the city. The night of August 17 he encamped his forces about six miles from Arredondo's camp between the Atascosa and Medina rivers and planned to ambush the royalists as they traveled through a defile along the Laredo road. The next morning, however, royalist scouts flushed the republicans and lured them into an ambush in a dense oak forest. Acting against Toledo's orders, the republicans, led by Miguel Menchaca, trudged through deep sand for several hours in pursuit of a cavalry unit, which they mistook for an army. In the meantime, Arredondo prepared breastworks on favorable ground and ordered his men not to fire on the rebels until they were within forty paces. By the time the republicans came within range, they were very hot, thirsty, and tired. After a furious four-hour battle involving infantry, cavalry, and artillery, the republicans broke ranks and ran. Most of those not killed on the battlefield were caught and executed during the retreat. The republicans were decimated. Less than 100 were able to escape alive. Of these, no more than twenty have thus far been identified. Arredondo lost only fifty-five men, who were given honorable burial the next day on the way to San Antonio, where he established martial law and severely punished the rebels and their families. One of Arredondo's more notable subalterns was Lt. Antonio López de Santa Anna, who learned the lessons of war well and returned to Texas with another army twenty-three years later.

The bodies of the republican warriors lost in battle were left to lie nine years on the battlefield until 1822 when José Félix Trespalacios, the first governor of the state of Texas under the newly established Republic of Mexico, ordered a detachment of soldiers to gather their bones and bury them honorably under an oak tree that grew on the battlefield. A Texas counterpart to the Mexican War of Independence, the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition of 1812–13 came literally to a dead end at the battle of Medina. So disastrous was la batalla del encinal de Medina that its battlefield has become lost, its "Green Flag" has remained largely unrecognized, and its participants have been generally unknown, unhonored, and unsung. It is noteworthy, however, that some of its participants were sons of American revolutionaries, some fought later with Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812, and some fought again during the second Texas Revolution in 1835–36. In the 2010s, based on archival records and maps, as well as various artifacts found by landowners, the Medina battlefield and burial sites were estimated to be in northern Atascosa County and near old Pleasanton Road.
The siege of Bexar (San Antonio) became the first major campaign of the Texas Revolution. From October until early December 1835 an army of Texan volunteers laid siege to a Mexican army in San Antonio de Béxar. After a Texas force drove off Mexican troops at Gonzales on October 2, the Texan army grew to 300 men and elected Stephen F. Austin commander to bring unity out of discord. The Texans advanced on October 12 toward San Antonio, where Gen. Martín Perfecto de Cos recently had concentrated Mexican forces numbering 650 men. Cos fortified the town plazas west of the San Antonio River and the Alamo, a former mission east of the stream.

By the time the Texans camped along Salado Creek east of San Antonio in mid-October their numbers had grown to over 400 men, including James Bowie and Juan N. Seguín, who brought with him a company of Mexican Texans. Bowie and James W. Fannin, Jr., led an advance to the missions below San Antonio in late October, while Cos brought in 100 reinforcement men. On October 25 the democratic Texans conducted a debate over strategy. Sam Houston, who had come from the Consultation government, urged delay for training and for cannons to bombard the fortifications. Austin and others won support to continue efforts at capturing San Antonio.

From San Francisco de la Espada Mission on October 27, Austin sent Bowie and Fannin forward to Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña Mission with ninety men to locate a position nearer the town for the army. There on the foggy morning of the twenty-eighth Cos sent Col. Domingo de Ugartechea with 275 men to attack the advance force. The Texans drove off the assault from a position along the
bank of the San Antonio River, inflicting over fifty casualties and capturing one cannon. Austin arrived after the battle of Concepción to urge an attack on San Antonio but found little support among his officers.

Cos then resumed defensive positions in San Antonio and the Alamo, while the Texans established camps on the river above and below the town and grew to an army of 600 with reinforcements from East Texas led by Thomas J. Rusk. After discussion among the Texan officers produced little support for an attack, some volunteers went home for winter clothes and equipment. Yet the arrival of more East Texans in early November offset the departures.

Texas and Mexican cavalry skirmished from time to time as the Texans scouted to capture Mexican supplies and to warn of any reinforcements for Cos. After a lack of early success, William Barret Travis led the capture of 300 Mexican mules and horses grazing beyond the Medina River on November 8. Four days later Ugartechea left San Antonio with a small cavalry force to direct the march of reinforcements from below the Rio Grande. Austin sent cavalry to intercept him, but the Mexican troops evaded them. Both armies suffered morale problems as a result of colder weather and limited supplies.

When Erastus (Deaf) Smith reported approaching Mexican cavalry on November 26, Burleson ordered out troops to cut them off. Skirmishing followed near Alazán Creek west of town, with attack and counterattack by both sides. Finally the Mexican troops withdrew into San Antonio. The engagement became known as the Grass Fight because captured Mexican supply animals carried fodder for horses rather than the rumored pay for Mexican soldiers.
Because of limited supplies and approaching winter, Burleson considered withdrawing to Goliad at the beginning of December. Information on Mexican defenses from Texans who were allowed to leave San Antonio led to new attack plans. But fears that the Mexican army had learned of the assault brought a near breakup of the Texan army. When a Mexican officer surrendered with news of declining Mexican morale, Benjamin R. Milam and William Gordon Cooke gathered more than 300 volunteers to attack the town, while Burleson and another 400 men scouted, protected the camp and supplies, and forced Cos to keep his 570 men divided between the town and the Alamo.

James C. Neill distracted the Mexican forces with artillery fire on the Alamo before dawn on December 5, while Milam and Francis W. Johnson led two divisions in a surprise attack that seized the Veramendi and Garza houses north of the plaza in San Antonio. Mexican cannon and musket fire kept the Texans from advancing farther during the day and silenced one of their cannons.
That night and the next day the Texans destroyed some buildings close to them and dug trenches to connect the houses they occupied. On the seventh the Texans captured another nearby house, but Milam died from a sharpshooter's bullet. Johnson then directed another night attack that seized the Navarro house. On December 8 Ugartechea returned with over 600 reinforcements, but only 170 were experienced soldiers. Untrained conscripts formed the other 450 men, who brought with them few supplies. Burleson sent 100 men into town to join the Texan force that captured the buildings of Zambrano Row in hand-to-hand fighting. Cos ordered his cavalry to threaten the Texan camp, but they found it well defended. That night Cooke with two companies seized the priest's house on the main plaza, but they seemed cut off from the Texas army.

When Cos sought to concentrate his troops at the Alamo, four companies of his cavalry rode away rather than continue the struggle. Cos then asked for surrender terms on the morning of December 9. Burleson accepted the surrender of most Mexican equipment and weapons, but allowed Cos and his men to retire southward because neither army had supplies to sustain a large group of prisoners.

Texas casualties numbered thirty to thirty-five, while Mexican losses, primarily in the Morelos Infantry Battalion, which defended San Antonio, totaled about 150; the difference reflected the greater accuracy of the Texans' rifles. Most of the Texas volunteers went home after the battle, but Texas troops remained in town, which, with Cos's withdrawal, left San Antonio and all of Texas under the Texans’ control.

Edward Burleson. Courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
In the years following the battle of San Jacinto, Mexican leaders periodically threatened to renew hostilities against Texas. Lacking the resources to attempt reconquest, the Centralist government of Antonio López de Santa Anna, who had returned to the presidency in the fall of 1841, ordered the army to harass the Texas frontier; his policy was intended to discourage immigration and foreign capital investment in the young republic. Accordingly, a force of 700 men under Gen. Rafael Vásquez marched into Texas and seized San Antonio on March 5, 1842. Forewarned of the Mexican advance, most Anglo-American residents had already evacuated the area, allowing Vasquez to enter the town unopposed.

Although Vásquez withdrew two days later and retreated back across the Rio Grande, the presence of Mexican troops on the West Texas frontier threw Anglo-Texans into a panic as hundreds fled to the safety of settlements east of the Brazos River. Fearing that the capital of Austin would be the Mexican army’s next target, President Sam Houston declared a national emergency and called a special session of the Texas Congress in Houston City. The president also ordered the removal of the government archives from Austin. The townspeople resisted the decree and believed the president wished to use the attack as a pretext to return the capital to Houston. A second attempt to remove the government archives would lead to the so-called Archives War several months later.

The Vásquez raid also aggravated tensions between San Antonio’s Tejanos and the town’s growing Anglo population. Accused of collaborating with the enemy, Juan N. Seguín, then serving as mayor, resigned his office and fled with his family below the Rio Grande. In Mexico the former Texas revolutionary organized a militia company of
former San Antonio residents, the *Defensores de Bexar*, which he would lead against Anglo troops for the next several years. Seeking to return to Texas after the Mexican War, he would maintain that he had been forced to take up arms by Mexican authorities, who threatened to imprison him for his role in the Texas Revolution.

The Vásquez expedition sparked calls for reprisals against Mexico which President Houston, a strong advocate of defensive measures, opposed. To quiet the general unrest, Houston reluctantly issued an appeal to the United States for money and volunteers and sent Adjutant General James Davis to Corpus Christi with orders to organize volunteer companies and hold them in readiness for an invasion of Mexico. In early June, Mexican militia and regular troops led by Antonio Canales Rosillo marched to the Nueces River and skirmished with Davis's small army of several hundred men at Fort Lipantitlán on June 7. Once again, Mexican forces quickly withdrew across the Rio Grande. Later that month the Texas Congress appropriated ten million acres of land to finance a war against Mexico. Believing the danger had passed, Houston vetoed the bill and dismissed Davis's forces.

On September 11, 1842, a Mexican army of 1,400 men under the command of Gen. Adrián Woll again captured San Antonio. Unlike the earlier Vásquez raid there was little advance warning, Woll having taken an old smuggling trail through the hills west of San Antonio. After a brief but spirited defense of the town, the Anglo-Texan residents surrendered. District court had been in session that week in San Antonio, and the captives included the judge and two members of the Texas Congress, as well as several attorneys and clerks. Juan Seguín commanded a militia unit in the assault on the town, confirming Anglo suspicions of Tejano collaboration with Mexico.

Woll held the town for a week, while a force of Texans was hastily organized under the command of Maj. John C. Hays and Mathew Caldwell. On September 17 the Texans engaged Woll’s troops northeast of San Antonio and repulsed several assaults by Mexican infantry at the battle of Salado Creek. During the course of
the fighting, a company of fifty-three Fayette County militiamen under the command of Capt. Nicholas Mosby Dawson arrived on the scene, but they were intercepted by Mexican cavalry before they could join the main Texan force. Two men managed to escape; the rest were killed or taken prisoner in what would become known as the Dawson Fight.

Two days after the fighting, Woll’s army evacuated the town and took with it a few dozen Anglo prisoners and as many as 200 Tejanos, who feared reprisals if they remained. Hays and Caldwell pursued the retreating Mexican army to the Hondo River, where they briefly attacked Woll’s rearguard before breaking off the pursuit.

The Woll invasion led to renewed calls in Texas for reprisals against Mexico and prompted President Houston to finally sanction an expedition of the lower Rio Grande valley. In December, an army of Texan volunteers sacked Laredo and briefly held the town of Guerrero. When its commander, Alexander Somervell, issued orders to abandon the campaign shortly afterwards, a majority of his men refused and elected new leaders. The reconstituted Texan force, known as the Mier Expedition, was defeated by the Mexican army at the battle of Mier on December 26, 1842.
San Antonio de Béxar Presidio, the center of Spanish defense in western Texas, was founded by Martín de Alarcón on May 5, 1718, on the west side of the San Antonio River one-fourth league from the San Antonio de Valero Mission. In 1722 the Marqués de Aguayo relocated the presidio almost directly across the river from the mission. The presidio at that time was housed in one adobe building thatched with grass; the soldiers lived in brush huts. Because of its proximity to the Rio Grande and the better organized missions in its vicinity, Béxar did not suffer want and distress as did the other presidios. In 1726, when Pedro de Rivera made his report, there were forty-five soldiers at San Antonio de Béxar. Nine additional soldiers were on mission guard or escort duty, and four settlers and their families lived near the presidio, as did the families of the soldiers. The total Spanish population was estimated at 200. Rivera recommended that the complement of the presidio be cut from fifty-four to forty-four and reported that the captain was efficient and the soldiers well-disciplined.

Although recommendations were made periodically that permanent fortifications be erected, no wall or stockade was ever built. In May 1763 Luis Antonio Menchaca, who relieved Toribio de Urrutia as commander, reported that the garrison consisted of twenty-two men, of whom fifteen were assigned to mission guard duty, leaving five in addition to the captain and sergeant in the presidio. The presidio was charged with the protection of five missions and a civil settlement and in addition was supposed to furnish escorts for officials and missionaries, take messages from one
post to another, and convoy supply trains. Menchaca also reported that, although the soldiers at San Antonio de Béxar were well-armed and well-disciplined, the number was inadequate for so important an outpost, especially since there was no breastwork for defense and the area was exposed to frequent attacks by Indians.

In 1772 the Marqués de Rubí recommended that San Antonio de Béxar be allowed to remain even though it was out of the semicircular defense line that he advocated. The withdrawal of the presidios of San Sabá, San Agustín de Ahumada, and Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes, as recommended by Rubí, left San Antonio de Béxar the northernmost Texas outpost of New Spain. Rubí's recommendation that San Fernando de Béxar, the civil settlement surrounding the presidio, be made the capital of Texas, was also followed. The Reglamento é instrucción para los presidios, issued in 1772, increased the garrison at San Antonio de Béxar to eighty men, the additional troops to be transferred from Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Los Adaes and San Agustín de Ahumada, and stipulated that twenty of the men were to be detached under a permanent lieutenant on Cibolo Creek to protect the ranches of the settlers and to keep open communications with La Bahía del Espíritu Santo. The regulations further provided that the captain of the presidio would also serve as governor of the province.

In December 1790 Pedro Huizar was commissioned to draw plans for the reconstruction of the presidio and improvement of its defenses, but the plans were not acted upon. The Second Flying Company of San Carlos de Parras was sent to reinforce the presidio in 1803. In 1805 Manuel Antonio Cordero, making use of
the discretionary powers granted him as governor, began the construction of a stockade along the northern and northeastern limits of the city and planned to build permanent quarters for the troops, a stockade around the presidio, and a small fort. His plans were not completed, however, for in 1806 the soldiers were stationed on the east side of the river near the Alamo, which had ceased to function as a mission and had become the chief building for the military. To the end of Spanish and Mexican Texas, the Alamo remained the principal unit of walled defense, while the two plazas, Military Plaza and Plaza de la Islas (the plaza names changed in 1836), separated by San Fernando Church (changed in 1874 to San Fernando Cathedral) and the priests' house, served as the center of municipal defense. A lookout fort was located across the river 1 ¼ miles from town.

Aside from Indian defense, Béxar Presidio became involved in hostilities during the Mexican and Texan wars of independence. Led by a retired militia officer, Juan Bautista de las Casas, the garrison rebelled against its Royalist officers in January 1811 (see CASAS REVOLT). The unit's loyalty to the crown was soon restored, and the garrison was part of the army with which Manuel de Salcedo fought the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition in 1812–13. Ousted for the first time from the city as a result of Gen. Martín Perfecto de Cos's defeat by Texan forces in December 1835, the garrison was briefly reinstated after the fall of the Alamo in March 1836. The presidio formally ceased to exist with the garrison's acknowledgment of Texas independence and surrender on June 4, 1836.
Fort Sam Houston is a major military installation in the northeast section of San Antonio. The United States Army first established a presence in San Antonio at Camp Almus near the Alamo in October 1845 when the Republic of Texas was in the process of becoming a state. In addition to a small garrison, the post at San Antonio included a quartermaster depot. As early as 1846 the city was attempting to secure the establishment of a permanent United States military installation. During the Mexican War, the army established a mobilization camp at San Pedro Springs for Gen. John E. Wool’s army. In December 1848 the headquarters of the Eighth Military Department moved to San Antonio. Except for the period from 1853 to 1855, there was a regional headquarters in San Antonio until the Civil War. The San Antonio Quartermaster Depot occupied the Alamo on January 2, 1849, on lease from the Catholic Church. The Vance house, a two-story stone house where the Sheraton Gunter Hotel now stands, was leased for the headquarters. Barracks for garrison and officer quarters were nearby in rented buildings. The city made several offers of free land, but all were refused except for a small parcel on Flores Street, which was used for the San Antonio Arsenal, constructed in 1859. In 1861 all federal facilities in San Antonio were surrendered to secessionist forces. Federal forces returned in 1865, and the headquarters occupied the French Building. Between 1870 and 1875, the city council made several offers of land to the U. S. War Department for a permanent post. The War Department eventually accepted three parcels of land amounting to 92.79 acres located two and one half miles northeast of the Alamo on what would soon be called Government Hill.
On June 7, 1876, construction was begun by the Edward Braden Construction Company on a 624-foot square quadrangle. In 1877 the depot began operating from the quadrangle. Work was completed in February 1878. Total cost for construction was $98,366.63. A temporary hospital was built, and the garrison troops of the post at San Antonio moved to Government Hill in 1879. Between 1878 and 1879 the quadrangle was modified to accommodate the headquarters, but the headquarters remained in San Antonio until 1881 when quarters were built for the staff west of the quadrangle on what would be called the Staff Post. The quarters were designed by Alfred Giles. The largest of these quarters, designated for the commanding general, would be named the Pershing House for Gen. John J. Pershing, who lived there in 1917. In 1886 a permanent hospital was added on the Staff Post. Between 1885 and 1891 forty-three acres and sixty buildings, also designed by Alfred Giles, were added to what was to become the Infantry Post, making Fort Sam Houston the second largest in the United States Army.

In 1890 the post at San Antonio was designated Fort Sam Houston in honor of Gen. Sam Houston. In 1886 Apache Chief Geronimo was held in the quadrangle before his exile to Florida. During the Spanish-American War, the First United States Volunteer Cavalry, commanded by Col. Leonard Wood but known as Roosevelt’s Rough Riders, mobilized in San Antonio and received their equipment from the depot in the quadrangle. Fort Sam Houston expanded again after the war, with the construction of the Cavalry and Light Artillery Post Addition, 1905–12. The War Department began purchasing land near Leon Springs in 1906 for firing ranges and training areas. This area became Camp Bullis in 1917. The first chapel on post
was built with funds donated by the citizens of San Antonio and the soldiers and dedicated by President William Howard Taft in 1909. It was named the "Gift Chapel." In 1908 a new hospital was built at the artillery post. It was enlarged in 1910 and again in 1917. In 1910 Lt. Benjamin Foulois brought the army's only airplane to Fort Sam Houston, and on March 2, 1910, he made his first solo flight, marking the "birth of military aviation" (see AVIATION).

By 1912 Fort Sam Houston was the largest army post with the headquarters of the Southern Department, the San Antonio Quartermaster Depot, and a garrison of an infantry regiment, a regiment of cavalry, a field artillery battalion, and signal and engineer troops. During Gen. Pershing’s punitive expedition into Mexico in 1916, Pershing’s force was supported by the depot in the quadrangle and under the operational control of the headquarters in the quadrangle.

During World War I an addition of 1,280 acres northeast of the fort was purchased for a National Army Cantonment called Camp Travis. More than 208,000 soldiers passed through Camp Travis, including the Ninetieth Division, the Eighteenth Division, and numerous other units. After the war, the Second Division was billeted in Camp Travis. The temporary buildings of Camp Travis rapidly wore out and were replaced under the Army Housing Program of 1926. This program employed the best urban planners to design military communities. At the suggestion of San Antonio architect Atlee Ayres, Spanish Colonial Revival style was chosen for what would be called the New Post. Five hundred new permanent buildings were constructed between 1928 and 1939, including a general hospital. In the 1920s and 1930s, Fort Sam Houston was involved in the filming of the motion pictures The Rough Riders (1927), The Big Parade (1925), and Wings (1927); supporting the Civilian Conservation Corps; conducting large-scale maneuvers; and developing the “triangular division.” By the outbreak of World War II in 1941, the post had added hundreds of temporary mobilization buildings.
During the war, the headquarters for the Third, Sixth, Ninth, Tenth, and Fifteenth Armies trained and deployed from Fort Sam Houston. So did the VIII Corps, Second Infantry Division, Eighty-eighth Infantry Division, Ninety-fifth Infantry Division, and a host of smaller units. In 1944 the headquarters of the Fourth Army moved into the quadrangle. Also on post were schools for the adjutant general, the provost marshal, and railway operations. There was a prisoner of war camp and the first unit of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps. Many of the top commanders during the war were Fort Sam Houston alumni. Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges commanded the First Army in Europe. Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger commanded the Sixth Army in the Pacific. Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson commanded the Fourth Army at Fort Sam Houston and the Ninth Army in Europe. Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner commanded the Tenth Army on Okinawa. When he was killed in action, Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell replaced him. Lt. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow commanded the Fifteenth Army in Europe. Brig. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who began the war as Chief of Staff of the Third Army at Fort Sam Houston, rose to the rank of General of the Army and was the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

After the war, the Fourth Army remained in the quadrangle, but Fort Sam Houston received a new mission—medical training. Brooke Army Medical Center was established with Brooke General Hospital, built in 1937, as its core. To this
were added the U. S. Army Medical Training Center which trained enlisted medics and the Medical Field Service School which trained all the officer medical branches as well as enlisted medical technicians. In 1946 the Institute of Surgical Research was moved to Fort Sam from Halloran General Hospital in New York. The institute specialized in trauma surgery. The Burn Center was established in 1949. During the Korean War and the Vietnam War, Fort Sam Houston trained all of the army’s medical personnel and earned the nickname, the “Home of Army Medicine.”

A series of reorganizations within the army in the early 1970s brought many changes to Fort Sam Houston. In 1971 the Fourth and Fifth Army areas were combined, and the Fifth Army Headquarters replaced the Fourth in the quadrangle. In 1972 the Medical Field Service School and the U. S. Army Medical Training Center, plus a few other medical-related activities, were combined to form the Academy of Health Sciences, putting all army medical training in one
institutions. Also in that year, the U.S. Army Health Services Command was established to command all medical activities in the army. Its headquarters were located at Fort Sam Houston. Fort Sam Houston was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1975.

Throughout the Cold War and the post-Cold War period, Fort Sam Houston provided trained soldiers and units for exercises; for international crises like Grenada, Panama, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm; and for national disasters. In 1996 Brooke Army Medical Center relocated to new facilities east of Salado Creek. After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, Fort Sam Houston again deployed trained troops and units to Iraq, Afghanistan, and wherever needed, and cared for casualties returning from the war zones. The headquarters for U.S. Army South moved to Fort Sam Houston in 2003, occupying the former Brooke General Hospital.

During the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005, several major organizations moved to Fort Sam Houston. The enlisted medical training of the United States Navy and United States Air Force moved to Fort Sam Houston and formed with the Army Medical Department Center and School a new Medical Education and Training Campus. Also coming to the post were the Installation Management Command and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command. In 2009 Fort Sam Houston became part of Joint Base San Antonio (the largest Joint Base) which had its headquarters at Fort Sam Houston.

In the 2010s Fort Sam Houston, Joint Base San Antonio included the 502nd Air Base Wing (the Joint Base headquarters), the headquarters of U.S. Army North/Fifth United States Army, United States Army South, the United States Army Medical Command, the Medical Education and Training Campus, Brooke Army Medical Center, the Institute for Surgical Research with its world-renowned Burn Center, the
Center for the Intrepid, the San Antonio Naval Recruiting District, the San Antonio Military Entrance Processing Center, and Fort Sam Houston’s sub-post, Camp Bullis. Also on the post are the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, Robert G. Cole Middle School and High School, and Fort Sam Houston Elementary School. The post also supports National Guard and Army Reserve units as well as Junior and Senior Reserve Officer Training Corps units. By virtue of the activities of the tenant organizations on the post and the service of the medical personnel of all the services who have trained at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio’s Army post has not only a national impact but also a global one.
Kelly Air Force Base was located at the southwestern edge of San Antonio and at its closing was the oldest continuously-operating flying base in the United States Air Force and the largest single employer in San Antonio. Capt. Benjamin Foulois, the "father of military aviation," selected the site in November 1916 to expand the activities of the fledgling Aviation Section of the United States Army Signal Corps from Fort Sam Houston. The new airfield was named for Lt. George E. Kelly, who was killed in a crash at Fort Sam Houston on May 10, 1911. He was the first American military aviator to lose his life while piloting a military aircraft. The base was initially called Aviation Camp, then Kelly Field. When the air force achieved autonomy in 1947, the name was changed to Kelly Air Force Base.


Flying activities began on April 5, 1917, and with America's entry into World War I grew rapidly. The facilities were divided into Kelly Number One, later to become Duncan Field, for maintenance and supply functions, and Kelly Number Two, devoted to flight training. The base served as a reception and testing center for recruits as well as a training center for almost all the skills required to operate an air force. More aviators of World War I earned their wings at Kelly Field than any other field in the United States. At some point of their training most of the future leaders of the air force passed through Kelly Field. They included the later air force chiefs of...
World War II brought major changes, including the consolidation of Kelly and Duncan Fields. A part of Kelly became the Aviation Cadet Reception Center, later to become Lackland Air Force Base. All pilot training was transferred to other installations, and Kelly became the base for the San Antonio Air Materiel Area, which stored and distributed materiel and modified or repaired aircraft, engines, and related equipment. During the war, women, who had already comprised almost 7 percent of the Kelly workforce in clerical positions, held more than a quarter of the jobs due to the high number of draft-eligible men who had joined the military. These women, whose jobs included sheet metal work and electrical instrument repair, came to be known as the “Kelly Katies.”

After the war Kelly continued to expand and had worldwide logistic responsibilities for such aircraft as the B-29, B-50, B-36, B-47, and B-58 bombers; F-102 and F-106 fighters; and various cargo aircraft, including the huge C-5 transport. To provide the facilities necessary to meet those responsibilities, all of the remaining World War I hangers were removed, and a million-square-foot hanger was constructed. It was the largest structure in the world without center columns. In keeping with developing technology, mechanized central receiving operations, underground fuel and defuel systems, modern data-processing systems, and an automated air freight terminal were installed at Kelly. In addition to the logistical mission, Kelly AFB was host to the Electronics Security Command, the Air Force News Service, and National Guard and reserve units.

In 1989 the base had more than 25,000 military and civilian employees, and its payroll exceeded $721 million. Kelly Air Force Base played a key role as a transit point for troops and materials during the military operations in Panama and the Persian Gulf.
The end of the Cold War brought about many changes, however, with shrinking military budgets and the consolidation of operations. In 1993 the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission placed Kelly on its closure list, but an outpouring of local support for the base saved it from closing. Efforts to save Kelly failed when BRAC once again recommended closure in 1995. According to *A History of Military Aviation in San Antonio*, “By a vote of six to two, the commission decided to recommend the San Antonio Air Logistics Center for closure and realign Kelly with adjoining Lackland Air Force Base.”

Throughout its long history, Kelly Air Force Base had employed generations of families in San Antonio, and the loss of such an established institution was seen as a hit to the local economy. In the years from 1995 to 2001 leading up to base closure, the Department of Defense advocated a new initiative of privatization and worked to transfer depot maintenance to private contractors who would hire former Kelly employees to work at the base’s former facilities. The majority of the workforce was accounted for through retirement, transfer, priority placement, or other new employment in the region; actual layoffs accounted for approximately 8 percent of the Kelly workforce. As privatization continued, the Greater Kelly Development Authority signed leases with commercial firms such as Boeing and Lockheed Martin. Lackland Air Force Base took over base support of Kelly Field Annex, the runway complex, and the Air Intelligence Agency, 433rd Airlift Wing, and 149th Fighter Wing on April 1, 2001.

The San Antonio Air Logistics Center was officially inactivated on July 13, 2001. Kelly Air Force Base closed and became KellyUSA. In the 2000s, with a concerted focus on the development of the base as an inland port, KellyUSA became Port San Antonio in 2007. The San Antonio Port Authority opened the East Kelly rail port in April 2007, and a new 89,600-square-foot air cargo terminal (with a 50,000-square-foot cargo staging area and...
fourteen acres of ramp space) opened in early 2008. That year the United States Air Force transferred more than 1,000 acres that held the Base Exchange, military housing, and other facilities to Port San Antonio. Lackland Air Force Base took back three buildings on base for renovations and the housing of new tenants, including the Air Force Medical Operations Agency. As of the 2010s the U. S. Air Force held responsibility for several buildings on the old Kelly grounds, and a large upgraded office complex on the east side housed the national headquarters for several important Air Force agencies, including the Medical Operations Agency, Air Force Civil Engineer Center, and the 24th Air Force (also known as Cyber Command). In 2017, the centennial of flight operations at Kelly, Port San Antonio had more than 80 public and private-sector tenants and employed more than 12,000 workers; it contributed more than $5 billion to the San Antonio economy.
Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, is one of the United States Military Health System’s premier medical facilities employing approximately 8,500 active duty, federal civilian, and contract health care professionals who care for more than 4,000 patients each day. BAMC provides primary, secondary, and tertiary health care to its eligible population in a 425-bed facility, including forty beds reserved for the internationally-renowned U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) Burn Center. In addition to its main inpatient facility, BAMC includes six outpatient clinics: CPT Jennifer M. Moreno Primary Care Clinic; McWethy Troop Medical Clinic; Taylor Burk Clinic; the Schertz Medical Home; the Westover Hills Medical Home; and the Corpus Christi Occupational Health Clinic. BAMC also conducts significant postgraduate medical education, medical training, and medical research programs.

From 1845 when the first U. S. Army units arrived in San Antonio until 1886 when the first permanent hospital was constructed on Fort Sam Houston, Army medical officers operated out of temporary facilities and buildings appropriated for the Army’s use. The first permanent hospital was a twelve-bed facility to which wings were added in 1890 and 1900. The 1886 hospital was used until it was replaced in 1908 and in the 2010s served as Distinguished Visitors Quarters. The 1908 hospital
was designated a station hospital, reflecting Fort Sam Houston’s growth to, at that time, the largest Army post in the country. Initially constructed with an eighty-four-bed capacity, it was expanded in 1910 to 152 beds by the addition of two wings.

In 1937 the first hospital that would carry the name Brooke opened as the post’s new station hospital, replacing the 1908 hospital. After the onset of World War II, the hospital was given additional capability and redesignated as a general hospital. In 1942 the hospital was renamed Brooke General Hospital for recently deceased Brig. Gen. Roger Brooke who had commanded the Fort Sam Houston Station Hospital between 1929 and 1933. The hospital continued to expand during the war and reached a maximum bed capacity of 7,800 beds in 1945. In 1946 Fort Sam Houston became the ‘home of Army Medicine’ with the relocation of the Medical Field Service School, U.S. Army Surgical Research Unit, and other Medical Department organizations to Fort Sam Houston. Brooke was redesignated again as Brooke Army Medical Center and over the ensuing years continued to thrive and grow. By 1987, as the hospital approached its fiftieth anniversary, BAMC had expanded to occupy all or part of fifty-nine separate buildings on Fort Sam Houston. The time had come to construct a new hospital.

‘New BAMC’ received its first patients in 1996. Since 2001 BAMC’s inpatient facility has cared for casualties returning from the battlefields of the global war on terror, serving as the sole verified Level I trauma center within the Department of Defense. Since 2007 the Center for the Intrepid on the BAMC main campus has provided long-term rehabilitation and recovery care for some of our nation’s most severely wounded warriors and has been responsible for advances in amputee care, prosthetics integration, and functional restoration for patients undergoing limb salvage. Since 2011 BAMC has been a mission partner with the 59th Medical Wing forming the San Antonio Military Health System.

New Brooke Army Medical Center.
Medal of Honor recipient, William James Bordelon, was born on December 25, 1920, in San Antonio, Texas. He was the son of William Jennings and Carmen Josephine (Pereira) Bordelon. As a youngster, Bordelon attended the local schools and served as an altar boy at Mission San José. In 1938 he graduated from Central Catholic High School where he had served as the top-ranking cadet in the Reserve Officers Training Corps. On December 10, 1941, three days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Bordelon enlisted in the United States Marine Corps.

Bordelon excelled in his military training in 1942 and 1943. During recruit training in San Diego, he recorded a score of 214 in rifle fire to qualify as a Marine “marksman.” Following recruit training, Bordelon was assigned to the Second Engineer Battalion, Second Marine Division, in San Diego where he underwent additional training, achieved rapid promotions, and attained the rank of sergeant on July 10. On October 20 his unit departed San Diego for New Zealand for six weeks of additional training in late 1942. Sergeant Bordelon witnessed his first combat on Guadalcanal during the period from January 4 to February 19, 1943. After the brutal Guadalcanal campaign, Bordelon returned to New Zealand for additional training and was promoted to staff sergeant (SSgt) on May 13, 1943.

With members of his Assault Engineer Platoon, First Battalion, Eighteenth Marines (attached to the Second Marines during the invasion of Tarawa), Staff Sergeant Bordelon landed on the beaches of the Japanese-held atoll of Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands on November 20, 1943. Taking intense enemy fire, Bordelon was among only
four Marines from his LVT (landing vehicle, tracked also known as amphibious tractor) to survive the landing. Along with a comrade, Bordelon moved out of the vehicle and immediately found himself caught in barbed wire while under heavy fire. After extracting themselves, the four men found some safety behind a four-foot-high seawall.

Having lost most of their equipment, Staff Sergeant Bordelon took charge of the desperate situation. He secured two packages of dynamite, made demolition charges, and then eliminated two pillboxes. Bordelon threw a charge at a third pillbox but was hit by machine gun fire in the process. Wounded by enemy fire and from the backlash of the charge, he secured a rifle and provided cover for a number of men attempting to climb the seawall. Hearing two wounded Marines in the water calling for help, Bordelon proceeded to rescue them in spite of his own serious injuries. Though injured from multiple wounds, the Texan assaulted a fourth Japanese position that he managed to destroy with a rifle grenade just before he was killed by a burst of hostile fire. Against enormous odds, the wounded Marine had destroyed four Japanese machine gun positions and rescued two Marines.

Bordelon’s actions at Tarawa were described as “valorous and gallant.” His heroic effort came “during a critical phase of securing the limited beachhead [and] was a contributing factor in the ultimate occupation of the island.” In a ceremony at Alamo Stadium in San Antonio, William and Carmen Bordelon were presented their son’s posthumous Medal of Honor by Marine Maj. Donald Taft on June 17, 1944. June 17 was proclaimed “Bordelon Memorial Day” in San Antonio, and Governor Coke Stevenson designated the week “Statewide Bordelon Week” in Texas. A destroyer, the USS Bordelon (commissioned in 1945), Veterans of Foreign Wars William J. Bordelon Post 4700, and American Legion Post 300 were named in honor of the Texan. The San Antonio native was the first Texas Marine to earn the Medal of Honor during World War II and the first man and only enlisted man to earn the Medal of Honor at Tarawa. He was also the first native-born San Antonian ever to receive the Medal of Honor. His other posthumous awards included the
Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal. In 1994 the Navy-Marine Corps Reserve building in San Antonio was named in Bordelon’s honor.

Bordelon was first buried at Tarawa in the Lone Palm Cemetery. After the war, his body was reburied in Hawaii in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Honolulu in 1947. In early 1995 Bordelon’s surviving siblings Robert Bordelon and Carmen Bordelon Imhoff, assisted by San Antonio Express-News staff writer J. Michael Parker and others, sought and were granted permission to return Bordelon to San Antonio. On November 19, 1995, the Texas hero’s flag-draped casket flanked by two Marine honor guards lay in state for public viewing at the Alamo—the shrine of Texas liberty. He was only the fifth person to lie in state in the Alamo up to that time. An estimated 2,500 people or more came to view the casket. On November 20, Rev. George Montague of St. Mary’s University concelebrated with Auxiliary Bishop John Yanta and nine other priests a funeral Mass in Mission San José. Sgt. William James Bordelon was reburied with full military honors at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery exactly fifty-two years after his death at Tarawa. In 2007 Central Catholic High School in San Antonio dedicated a new memorial in the lobby, and in 2009 a section of Interstate 37 that ran between IH 35 and IH 10 in San Antonio was named to commemorate Bordelon.
Cleto Luna Rodríguez, Medal of Honor recipient, was born on April 26, 1923, in San Marcos, Texas. After his parents died when he was nine, he moved to San Antonio with relatives in 1932. He worked at the Gunter Hotel and as a newsboy. He attended Washington, Irving, and Ivanhoe schools. Rodríguez was one of an estimated 375,000 to 500,000 Mexican American soldiers in World War II. The percentage of persons of Mexican descent who served in the armed forces was higher than that of Mexican Americans in the general public, and they constituted the most decorated ethnic group.

Rodríguez entered the United States Army in early 1944 and served as a technical sergeant. He was an automatic rifleman with Company B, 148th Infantry, 37th Division, when his unit attacked the strongly-defended Paco Railroad Station during the battle for Manila in the Philippine Islands. On February 9, 1945, while his unit was halted by heavy enemy fire, Rodríguez and his partner, John N. Reese, Jr., of Pryor, Oklahoma, advanced forward to a covered position where they remained for an hour and continued to fire at the enemy and killed more than thirty-five. They continued their advance to the Paco Railroad Station, where Rodríguez, throwing five grenades, killed seven enemy soldiers and destroyed a 20-mm gun and damaged another heavy machinegun. The two soldiers then made their way back to American lines, but Reese was killed during their return. In total, during two and one-half hours, the two soldiers killed more than eighty-two enemy soldiers and disorganized their defense, thus facilitating the defeat of the Japanese at their strong point. Two days later, Rodríguez singlehandedly killed six enemy soldiers and destroyed a 20-mm gun. Thus on two occasions he "materially aided the advance of U.S. troops in Manila." Later,
he was promoted to staff sergeant. At the time, Rodríguez was the fifth person of Mexican descent ever to receive the Medal of Honor. Six Texans of Mexican descent received the award for service in World War II. Rodríguez was also the first Mexican American GI to win the highest award in the South Pacific. He also received the Silver Star, Purple Heart, Bronze Star (with oak leaf cluster), Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal (with two campaign stars), World War II Victory Medal, and the Philippine Liberation Medal.

Upon his return to San Antonio, city officials and the public greeted Rodríguez and gave him a key to the city. He married Flora Muñiz on November 11, 1945, and they had four children. Rodríguez joined the League of United Latin American Citizens, Council 2, in 1946. In 1947 he began work as a representative of the Veterans Administration. He served in the United States Air Force from 1952 to 1954 and again in the U.S. Army from 1955 to 1970, when he retired as a master sergeant. Ivanhoe Elementary School was renamed Cleto Rodríguez School in 1975. Rodríguez died on December 7, 1990, and is buried at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. A section of U.S. 90 in San Antonio was named the Cleto Rodríguez Freeway on December 7, 1991. He is portrayed in murals at the San Antonio Central Library and the Cassiano Housing Projects.
Joske's, formerly also known as J. Joske, Joske Brothers, and J. Joske and Sons, was headquartered in San Antonio and once owned twenty-six retail stores in Texas and one in Phoenix, Arizona. **Julius Joske**, who immigrated to Texas from Germany in 1867, chose San Antonio as his home because of its access to Texas military installations, Indian areas, and Mexico. The choice was a strategic one; San Antonio was an important marketplace that supplied the outlying military posts with inventory and served as a trade link with Mexico. Joske's first store, located on Main Plaza in San Antonio and known as J. Joske, opened in 1867 and operated until 1873, when Joske sold it and went back to Berlin for his family. He returned to the Alamo City later that same year and with the help of his sons Siegfried, Albert, and Alexander opened a new store called J. Joske and Sons in the 800 block of Austin Street in a small **adobe** house close to the United States Army corral.
After two years the family moved the store to Alamo Plaza, not far from the Grand Opera House, and changed its name to Joske Brothers. In 1878 the operation expanded its space and added women's merchandise, and in 1887 the store moved to an even bigger facility at the corner of Alamo and Commerce streets. Joske's personnel grew from three to thirty-five at a time when San Antonio's population was 25,000.

In 1903 Alexander Joske purchased his father's and brothers' interest in the company, and in 1909 he once again expanded both the Commerce Street location and its product line. At the time, the store's merchandise was primarily for men and boys; the expansion increased the piece-goods department so ladies could have dresses made in the store after selecting patterns and materials. The Commerce Street expansion added elevators and new floors, and established customer-service departments, delivery services, and promotional gimmicks to attract public attention. One such promotion was a 3,000 candle-power searchlight used to highlight the store; in 1922 the light was used to guide Lt. James H. Doolittle of Kelly Field to a safe landing.

After Alexander Joske died, Dr. Frederic Goldstein Oppenheimer, Alexander's son-in-law, became the firm's president in 1925. Four years later Hahn Department Stores purchased Joske's, and in 1932 it was taken over by Allied Stores Corporation. James H. Calvert went to San Antonio from Boston to assume the presidency of Joske's
of Texas and held the position until he retired in 1964. Calvert, an English native, had been an officer of the Royal Flying Corps in World War I and went to Boston in 1920 to learn about department stores. Before coming to Joske's, he had been a merchandise manager for Jordan Marsh, an Allied Stores affiliate and one of the largest and oldest stores in New England.

At the time, Joske's Commerce Street location was on the fringe of the business district. Calvert resisted opening new locations downtown and expanding the store to the suburbs, deciding instead to let customers come to the Alamo Plaza location. He also spearheaded the acquisition of such additional properties as the Plaza Theater and the rest of the Joske square block (excluding St. Joseph's Church, sometimes jokingly called St. Joske's) in order to increase the size of the store and alleviate parking problems. Calvert instigated two major expansion projects: the addition that made Joske's the first completely air-conditioned store in Texas, and an addition of 100,000 square feet after the Conroy building on Alamo Street had been torn down in 1939. Joske's eventually added equivalent warehouse space in 1946, and a 1953 building program doubled the store's size to 551,000 square feet and added parking spaces to make twenty acres of parking. While the main store increased in size, the chain spread as well. In 1957 a Las Palmas store location opened to serve the western and southwestern sections of San Antonio; in 1965 the firm purchased Wolff and Marx (subsequently sold in 1968) with its North Star Mall branch; in 1969 Joske's opened a store under its own name in North Star Mall; and in 1971 Joske's opened a branch in Austin.

After Calvert retired in 1964, J. H. Morse took over the presidency, while Calvert remained chairman of the board. Morse, who joined Joske's in 1935 and had been a vice president since 1938, was responsible for beautification efforts at the city's HemisFair '68 grounds. After his retirement in 1968 he was succeeded by M.
Eventually, Allied Stores Corporation changed the names of its Tiche-Goettinger stores in Dallas to Joske's, making a total of twenty-seven outlets in Texas. In late 1986 the Campeau Corporation of Toronto, Canada, purchased Allied Stores Corporation, and in 1987 Dillard's Department Stores of Little Rock, Arkansas, bought the Joske operation from Campeau. All of the Joske stores were henceforth called Dillard's.

Throughout its history the Joske's chain remained an innovator in the retail industry by developing new approaches to advertising and product development. Alexander Joske, for example, often bought advertising space in the San Antonio dailies, in which he publicly expressed his thoughts. In one such article, he denied a rumor that
In response to a shortage of newspaper advertising caused by a postwar rationing of newsprint, the chain cosponsored the first definitive study of radio and television advertising. Joske's opened a 500-seat auditorium for civic-group meetings and special events and established the Camelia Award, for which the company commissioned original works of art by state and local artists to present annually to an outstanding fashion designer. The store also produced its own newsletter, The Joske Jabberwocky. In the community, Joske's is credited with introducing the nation's first teen-age beauty pageant, teen advisory boards, charity benefits, art exhibitions, Christmas events, Boy Scout activities, and Mexican-American trade and heritage events. Works of art collected by Frederic Joske Oppenheimer and his wife can be found in various Texas art museums.

Beginning in 1933 the company established the Joske’s Quarter Century Club to thank twenty-five-year employees with 25 percent discounts, jewelry, and free monthly breakfasts. The Joske’s Quarter Century Club continued to meet, and former employees gathered two or three times a year after the store’s closing. The club finally disbanded in 2012 and held its last meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church in San Antonio on December 1, 2012. The Joske’s building (which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places) at Alamo and Commerce streets was purchased by Ashkenazy Acquisitions Corporation of New York in 2005 and vacated by Dillard’s in 2008. Renovations began in 2014 to transform the building into a mall-style venue, part of the “Shops at Rivercenter mall.” The interior was gutted, but the building’s Art Deco façade was restored. The building reopened in January 2016.
The Pearl Brewing Company in San Antonio traces its beginnings to brewer Jaroslav B. Behloradsky, who arrived in San Antonio by the early 1880s and opened his City Brewery and began producing a lager beer in 1884. Behloradsky’s City Brewery was sold, and businessmen Oscar Bergstrom, Frederick Hartz, and brewer Otto Koehler took control of the brewery by early 1887 and drew up a new charter as the San Antonio Brewing Association (1887–1918). The Pearl name reportedly came from a German brewmaster that had thought that the bubbles in a freshly-poured glass of beer resembled pearls. He called them "Perlen." Though many histories of Pearl have stated that the San Antonio Brewing Association purchased the formula and name from the Kaiser-Beck Brewery in Bremen, Germany, author Jeremy Banas has written that Otto Koehler may have secured the name and formula from another source—possibly the A. Griesedieck Brewing Company in St. Louis in 1886. Koehler had previously worked for Griesedieck.

The beer originally debuted in the Alamo City as XXX Pearl Beer. The designation of XXX was a long-accepted symbol of the highest quality of brew by European monasteries. A new brewhouse was constructed in 1894, and the building became a symbolic feature of San Antonio industry. Otto Koehler, who had managed the Lone Star Brewery in San Antonio, became the president and manager of the San Antonio Brewing Association. In 1902 the officers were Otto Koehler, president; Otto
Koehler remained president until his death in 1914. His wife, Emma, succeeded him as the chief executive. The San Antonio Brewing Association was the only brewery in San Antonio to survive prohibition, due in large part to the hard work and determination of Emma Koehler. Mrs. Koehler kept it going during those lean years by producing near beer, bottling soft drinks, entering the commercial ice and creamery businesses, and operating an advertising sign company. Within fifteen minutes after prohibition ended in Texas on September 15, 1933, 100 trucks and twenty-five boxcars loaded with Pearl beer rolled out of the brewery grounds. In 1952 the San Antonio Brewing Association changed its corporate name to the Pearl Brewing Company in an effort to more closely associate itself with its product.

Pearl acquired the Goetz Brewing Company of St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1961 and merged with the Southdown Corporation of Houston in 1970. The acquisitions allowed Pearl to move into national markets, and in its heyday, Pearl beer was nationally-known and distributed across the United States. Pearl then expanded its product line by buying the formula and label to Jax beer, a popular New Orleans product. In 1978 Paul Kalmanovitz, owner of S&P Company out of Mill Valley, California, acquired Pearl Brewing Company. Kalmanovitz later acquired some of the assets of Pabst Brewing Company by 1985, and Pabst took over Pearl operations. In 1981 Pearl’s 1.8 million
In 2002 Silver Ventures (owned by San Antonio businessman Christopher “Kit” Goldsbury) purchased the twenty-two-acre Pearl Brewery complex and developed a master plan for both revitalizing the area while preserving its historic structures. By the 2010s the San Antonio River Walk’s Museum Reach extended to the district known simply as the Pearl. Tenants of the neighborhood included a San Antonio campus of the Culinary Institute of America, a farmers market, restaurants, shops, upscale apartments, and business firms. Hotel Emma, named for Emma Koehler, opened in the historic brewhouse in 2015.

In 2001 the brewery closed, and Miller Brewing Company in Fort Worth contracted with Pabst to take over the production of Pearl and Lone Star brand beers. In the 2010s Pearl beer was still sold in regional markets in Texas. See also BREWING INDUSTRY.

barrels of beer were distributed in forty-five states, and the company employed 535 people at its San Antonio facility. In 1995 the employee force stood at 350, and production stood at 1.1 million barrels of beer. With changing tastes in a highly-competitive market, Pabst initiated cost-saving measures and halted its own production. The Pearl brewery closed in June 2001, and Miller Brewing Company in Fort Worth contracted with Pabst to take over the production of Pearl and Lone Star brand beers. In the 2010s Pearl beer was still sold in regional markets in Texas. See also BREWING INDUSTRY.
Gebhardt Mexican Foods Company was a San Antonio-based firm that was started in 1896 by William Gebhardt, a German immigrant who settled in New Braunfels, Texas, with his parents in the 1880s. Gebhardt’s interest in Mexican food fueled his desire to start the company, which went on to shape the commercialization of chili powder and Mexican convenience foods across the United States for nearly a century.

In 1892 young Gebhardt opened a café in New Braunfels, Texas. For four years he operated the establishment in the back of a saloon, known variously as Miller’s and later the Phoenix Saloon, and located on the corner of West San Antonio Street and Castell Street. Over those years, Gebhardt experimented with grinding herbs and dried peppers, and he cooked a variety of chilies for his customers. He discovered that by drying his chili peppers and grinding them into a flavored powder, he could keep the powder fresh for several months. He packed the dried powder, which he initially called “Tampico Dust,” into small airtight glass bottles. Producing approximately five cases of chili powder at a time, he drive his wagon into town to sell to various markets. Having learned that, historically, Indian groups had used ancho peppers for seasoning, Gebhardt imported ancho peppers by the wagonload from San Luis Potosí, Mexico. This surplus allowed him to stock up and sell his powder any season of the year.

In 1896 Gebhardt debuted the name Gebhardt’s Eagle Brand Chili Powder, and he registered the Eagle Brand name and trademarked his Eagle Brand Chili Powder.
Gebhardt moved to San Antonio in 1898 and opened a factory on West Commerce Street. He soon obtained financial investment from his brother-in-law, Albert Kronkosky, and the company incorporated in 1903. Gebhardt initially sold his powder in Texas, but his success with his product allowed him to take credit as the first entrepreneur to market his chili powder on a large scale. Gebhardt Chili Powder Company published a cookbook, *Mexican Cooking*, in 1908 in an effort to introduce and educate the American public on Mexican food. It was one of the first cookbooks to focus on Mexican-American cooking and spurred several later editions.

In 1911 Gebhardt acquired his butcher’s license, which allowed his company to grow and diversify its products by selling canned chili and canned tamales. By 1915 Gebhardt Chili Powder Company was heralded as the largest spice manufacturer in the world. Two plants in San Antonio employed more than 100 people. Albert Kronkosky was president of the company, and William Gebhardt served as vice president. G. G. Geyer worked as secretary, treasurer, and general manager of the company. The product line expanded to include canned beans, deviled sandwich spread, enchiladas, sauces, dips, peppers and spices—under such names as Eagle Tabasco Sauce, Eagle Chili Con Carne, Deviled Chili Meats, Eagle Spaghetti and Chili, and others.

Gebhardt Chili Powder Company expanded exponentially and sold products in most of the United States as well as London, South Africa and Canada. Profits reached almost $1 million by 1915, and Gebhardt’s company produced 18,000 bottles of chili powder a day.

The September 27, 1922, edition of the *San Antonio Evening News* reported that the company’s two manufacturing plants, one located on Frio Street and a new plant on South Laredo Street, employed more than 200 workers. The company also used

representatives that traveled across the United States. A Gebhardt representative had established El Rancho, a Mexican restaurant that served Gebhardt products at 704 Seventh Avenue in New York City. Gebhardt’s company had also established pepper plantations in Mexico to cultivate ancho peppers for “exclusive use” of the company.

The company marketed its products on radio commercials, and newspaper and magazine advertisements. The brand packaging was bright and colorful, and ads usually featured animated drawings, catchy slogans, and blurbs such as:

The “Chili Queens” may have given it the name…BUT Gebhardt gave “Chili” its flavor…San Antonio style.

Gebhardt’s. If you think it’s just a great chili, you might be missing something.

That Real Mexican Tang.

At its height, Gebhardt’s products were sold across the United States as well as in nineteen countries across the globe.

Founder William Gebhardt retired from his business in 1936, and he died in 1956. In 1960 Gebhardt Chili Powder Company was sold to Chicago-based Beatrice Foods Company, which also owned and operated other brands, including Rosarita Mexican Food Company and La Choy Food Products Company. Gebhardt’s became an independent division of Beatrice Foods, and the acquisition allowed for increased national marketing.

In the 1980s the Gebhardt factory was upgraded and expanded to more than 115,000 square feet on 3.6 acres. Located at 1810 S. Laredo Street, the plant had a boiler, canning facility, and two warehouses. By 1984 the company, which had expanded to five times its size since prior to 1960, was renamed Gebhardt Mexican Foods. In 1985...
Beatrice was acquired by Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts, & Company, and the Gebhardt brand became part of the Beatrice/Hunt-Wesson division. Though sales rose in the western states of Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington, more than 60 percent of all profits still came from sales in Texas.

In 1990 ConAgra Foods, headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, purchased Beatrice/Hunt-Wesson, which included Gebhardt Mexican Foods. The San Antonio plant was eventually closed. ConAgra still owned Gebhardt in the 2010s. Although corporate ownership de-emphasized the Gebhardt’s brand, some products, including William Gebhardt’s famous chili powder, were still found in some grocery stores, including the H-E-B supermarket chain in Texas and Mexico.
Edgar Gardner Tobin, pilot, businessman, and philanthropist, son of William Gerard and Ethel (Murphy) Tobin, was born in San Antonio, Texas, on September 7, 1896. He was a graduate of West Texas Military Academy in 1914. During World War I Tobin was a pilot and served first in the 94th Aero Squadron (a member of Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker's "Hat in the Ring" squadron) and then in the 103rd Aero Squadron. He earned the title "ace" after he had downed five enemy planes and an observation balloon. For his service his honors included the French Croix de Guerre and the Distinguished Flying Cross. By the age of twenty-two he had achieved the rank of major.

Tobin returned to San Antonio after the war and worked as an auto dealer. On December 29, 1921, he married Katharine Harrison, the daughter of Col. Ralph Harrison at Fort Sam Houston. They had one daughter, Katharine, but divorced within a few years. On November 10, 1926, Tobin married Margaret Lynn Batts, a regent of the University of Texas from 1947 to 1955 and daughter of Robert Lynn Batts. They had one son, Robert.

By 1928 Tobin was an agent for a commercial aircraft, American Eagle, and his position proved fortuitous when Austrian engineer Gilard Kargl approached him about aerial photography and its use in mapping for oil companies. Thus in 1928 Tobin founded the Edgar Tobin Aerial Surveys firm in San Antonio. After entering the commercial mapping field for Humble Oil and Refining Company (see EXXON COMPANY, U.S.A.), he cemented his reputation in mapping operations for oil companies. From 1933 to 1971 he mapped more than a million land parcels.
During World War II his company mapped the entire United States for the federal government, and he served as special civilian adviser to Gen. Henry H. Arnold, United States Army Air Forces. Texas governor Allan Shivers later credited Tobin’s pioneering mapping as a major contributor to the success of the war effort in the United States through his “mapping of invasion routes.”

In San Antonio Edgar Tobin generously contributed to many charitable organizations. He died on January 10, 1954, near Shreveport, Louisiana, in a plane crash that took the lives of other prominent businessmen, one of whom was Thomas Elmer Braniff. Tobin was buried in Sunset Memorial Park in San Antonio. At the time of his death his company was the largest aerial mapping firm in the world. His wife and son carried on the business, which went through several mergers until Tobin International, Ltd., was acquired by P2 Energy Solutions in 2004. The Edgar Tobin Foundation was established in San Antonio.
WOAI, the oldest radio station in San Antonio, signed on the air on September 25, 1922. Broadcasting over frequency 1190 AM using a 500-watt transmitter, the station was touted as one of the “first super powered stations in Texas” and was the brainchild of founder G.A.C. Halff. A popular story tells that Halff wished to carry out a promotional gimmick of giving away hundreds of small radios in connection with his business, and therefore he had to put a radio station on the air so that his customers would have something to listen to. Initial programming included a variety of information and also featured daily violin and piano selections.

WOAI increased its transmitter to 1,000 watts in July 1925. That year the station aired its first commercially-sponsored program that presented an orchestra performing Mexican songs. In 1926 the station increased to 2,000 watts and participated in the first successful chain broadcast with other stations across the United States. It joined the world’s first network, the National Broadcasting Company, on February 6, 1928. WOAI continued to increase its broadcasting power with a 5,000-watt transmitter in 1927 and the legal limit of 50,000 watts in 1930, making it the only 50,000-watt station in South Texas.

By the early 1930s WOAI had built its first radio newsroom and became one of the first stations to employ a local news staff. News was a major focus along with broadcasting soap operas.
In 1934 WOAI, along with WBAP in Fort Worth, WFAA in Dallas, and KPRC in Houston—the four largest stations in Texas, formed the Texas Quality Network. Connected by telephone lines, the stations established the capacity for simultaneous broadcasts and commanded a combined night-time power of 101,000 watts. This shared programming allowed the radio stations to carry the highly popular Light Crust Doughboys radio show, for example. WOAI had two local western swing groups of its own—the Tune Wranglers and Jimmie Revard and His Oklahoma Playboys. In the mid-1930s, both bands were favorite mainstays on the radio station.

WOAI constructed a single 425–foot tower near Selma, northeast of San Antonio, in 1937, which provided for extended coverage. The station’s dedication to news coverage resulted in the hiring of young news reporter Henry Guerra in 1939. Guerra was the first Mexican American to broadcast the news on a major radio station. His love of local history also led to the development of his own programs—13 Days of the Alamo and Henry Guerra’s San Antonio. He would remain with WOAI until his retirement in 1992.

In 1941 WOAI became one of twelve radio stations in the United States to be designated its own unduplicated or “clear channel” frequency as part of an emergency information system. As a result, WOAI was moved to 1200 kHz on March 29, 1941, and in fact remained the only station licensed to that frequency through the 1980s. As one of a select group of clear channel stations, also known as “highways in the sky,” the programs of WOAI could be heard across North America and even south into Central America some nights—reinforcing the station’s reputation as the “Blowtorch.”

During the 1940s WOAI presented Sunday broadcasts of Musical Interpretations, a classical music program that featured San Antonio Symphony conductor Max.
San Antonio’s first television station WOAI-TV went on the air on December 11, 1949. With the advent of television, the radio station underwent a transition during the mid-1950s from a news and mostly soap opera format to a music format. The station dropped the soap operas and hired disc jockeys to present a variety of music—from early rock-and-roll to country to the popular songs of the day.

Longtime staff announcer Bill McReynolds was hired at WOAI in 1947 and served as the host of the station’s country music band, the Radio Rodeo Gang. By the early 1950s he also did a farm and ranch program and would serve as the farm and ranch reporter for fifty years.

Aaron Allan, on staff at WOAI from 1954 to 1959, experienced the format change and was kept on staff as the country deejay with his own show. He recalled, “On my show I played country and folk music recordings and played my guitar and sang.”

Allan’s musical guests included a young and nervous Johnny Cash in one of his earliest interviews on the radio in 1955—well before he made his debut on the Grand Ole Opry.

WOAI’s four studios could accommodate any kind of musical entertainment from a full-sized orchestra to Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys to Red River Dave McEnery. Allan played a role in a small piece of San Antonio radio history himself by

Reiter as the host. Reiter also conducted the orchestra live on WOAI from San Antonio’s Municipal Auditorium for NBC’s nationwide Pioneers of Music.

Bill McReynolds, a WOAI farm and ranch icon. Courtesy of San Antonio Express-News.

performing live on the radio “The Ballad of Emmett Till,” a song Red River Dave had composed about an African-American youth who had been murdered in Mississippi.

WOAI legend Bob Guthrie was hired in 1956 as a staff announcer. He became the station’s midday news anchor and remained on staff until his retirement in 2009. Along the way, he garnered awards in journalism from Associated Press, United Press International, Sigma Delta Chi, and other organizations.

WOAI continued to provide a variety of music through the 1960s. In 1975 the fledgling company of what would be Clear Channel Communications (see iHEARTMEDIA, INC.), established by Lowry Mays and Red McCombs, purchased WOAI for $1.5 million. During the latter half of the 1970s, the station’s format of primarily music with news and agriculture was gradually changed to a news/talk radio format. During the 1980s sports telecasts were also added, and in 1985 the station constructed a new 50,000-watt transmitter with a 540-foot antenna.

With Clear Channel Communication’s acquisition of Premiere Radio Networks, a syndicator of national talk shows, in 1998, a number of national radio programs such as Rush Limbaugh, and Coast to Coast AM were broadcast on WOAI. In the 2010s the station included a weekday morning news program with Charlie Parker and an evening talk show with Joe Pags (Joe Pagliarulo) along with the nationally-syndicated programs of Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, and others. Weekend programming included a variety of “how-to” shows, and the station was San Antonio’s broadcast home for the San Antonio Spurs. WOAI is one of the few stations west of the Mississippi River (and the westernmost station in the United States) with a call sign that begins with “W.” Its designation was grandfathered in when the United States government required that call signs of stations west of the Mississippi River start with “K.”
Artemisia Bowden, African American school administrator and civic leader, was born on January 1, 1879, in Albany, Georgia. She was the daughter of former slaves Milas Bowden and Mary (Molette) Bowden. She grew up in Brunswick, Georgia, where her father was an active member of St. Athanasius Episcopal Methodist Church, and Artemisia and her siblings attended St. Athanasius School. She graduated from St. Augustine’s Normal School in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1900. After teaching for two years in North Carolina, first at a parochial school and then at High Point Normal and Industrial School in High Point, North Carolina, she moved to San Antonio, Texas, in 1902 to take over as principal of St. Philip's Day School, an Episcopal day school for black girls (see ST. PHILIP'S COLLEGE). She soon changed the school’s name to St. Philip’s Industrial School for Girls. Under her guidance the school added a boarding department, outgrew its original facilities, and by 1926 had achieved private junior college status, with Bowden as president.

During the Great Depression, when the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of West Texas would no longer accept financial responsibility for the college, Bowden refused to let the school die. She assumed the obligation of keeping St. Philip's open and began a campaign to have the San Antonio Independent School District take over the institution. Although she argued that the city owed African Americans a publicly supported junior college as long as it continued to operate a white junior college out of public funds, the board of education repeatedly refused to accede. Finally, in 1942, it reluctantly incorporated St. Philip's into the municipal junior college system, and Artemisia Bowden continued to direct it as dean. In 1954, after fifty-two years as head of St. Philip’s, she retired and became dean emerita.
Bowden did graduate work during the summers at Columbia University, Cheney State Teachers' College, the New York School of Social Work, and the University of Colorado. She was granted a B.A. degree in 1935 by St. Augustine's College, her alma mater, after it was upgraded from a normal school, and received honorary degrees from Wiley and Tillotson colleges. She was president of the San Antonio Metropolitan Council of Negro Women, founder and president of the city's Negro Business and Professional Women's Club, and a member of the executive committee of the Coordination Council on Juvenile Delinquency of the Texas Social Welfare Association. She held memberships in the National Association of College Women's Clubs and several state and national associations for professional educators. She was named to the Texas Commission on Interracial Relations in 1947.

Bowden, who never married, gave her time outside St. Philip's to civic and welfare projects for the African Americans of San Antonio. She was primarily responsible for the introduction of a black nursing unit in Robert B. Green Hospital, for securing Lindbergh Park for black residents, and for establishing the East End Settlement House. She also helped establish the State Training School for Delinquent Negro Girls at Brady (see CROCKETT STATE SCHOOL).

The National Council of Negro Women cited Artemisia Bowden as one of the ten most outstanding woman educators in the country. Many local organizations also recognized her lifetime of service, including Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, which named her woman of the year in 1955. Bowden Elementary School in San Antonio and Bowden Administration Building at St. Philip's College are named in her honor. She was a member of the Southern Conference of Christians and Jews and of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in San Antonio. She died in San Antonio on August 18, 1969. She was cremated, and her ashes were interred at Good Shepherd Church in Corpus Christi. She was survived by a brother and two sisters. In 2015 the national Episcopal Church included Bowden on its calendar that commemorates people in its publication Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints. She was the first person from the Diocese of West Texas so included.
Ellen Dorothy Schulz Quillin, botanist, author, educator, and museum director, daughter of William and Anna (Muelfeldt) Schulz, was born in Saginaw County, Michigan, on June 16, 1887. She graduated from the University of Michigan in 1918 with an M.S. and did postgraduate work at the University of Texas from 1920 to 1922. She lacked only a few hours of receiving her Sc.D. at the University of Michigan. Her professional positions included head of the science department, Main Avenue High School, San Antonio, 1916–23; director of nature study and science, San Antonio Public Schools, 1923–33; instructor, systematic botany, University of Texas, summers, 1921–23; and lecturer on natural history, 1927–51. On July 29, 1927, Ellen Schulz married Roy W. Quillin, an oil company employee and ornithologist. They were kindred spirits, exploring the countryside around San Antonio and studying the flora and fauna on their weekend jaunts. They had no children.

Ellen Quillin's greatest contribution to the cultural history of the state, however, was the establishment of the Witte Museum in San Antonio. She was instrumental in starting the San Antonio Museum Association and raising funds for the Attwater Collection (the collection of Henry P. Attwater), which was housed at Main Avenue High. She worked to provide a larger space to showcase the Attwater collection and others like it. She successfully petitioned Mayor John W. Tobin for a site and funds for a museum and raised funds for the museum building and exhibits. The Witte Memorial Museum opened on October 8, 1926, as an institution devoted to natural history, Texas history, and the arts and sponsored by the San Antonio Museum.
Association, the San Antonio Conservation Society, and the San Antonio Art League. Ellen Schulz Quillin was elected the first director of the museum. Initially and through the 1930s, she was paid one dollar a year and managed an operating budget of approximately $100. She held the position of director for thirty four years; she retired in 1960 but continued as director emeritus until her death.

Under her leadership the museum acquired historic houses, developed departments of natural history and art, and collected items to tell the story of Texas. When museums were closing all over the country during the Great Depression, Ellen Quillin opened the Reptile Garden on June 8, 1933. This bizarre venture served to raise enough funding to keep museum personnel on curtailed salaries and the museum open. But the Reptile Garden became something more than a tourist attraction; it became a research facility for scientific antivenom experimentation and a center of interest in herpetology that attracted scholars from many parts of the United States, Mexico, and South America.

Ellen Quillin served as assistant director of the San Antonio Art Institute from 1942 to 1950 and as acting director from 1950 to 1952. Her memberships and honors included Texas Academy of Science (charter member, fellow 1929, honorary life fellow 1949, vice president 1942); Texas Nature Federation (charter member); Cactus
and Succulent Society of America (fellow 1945); Phi Sigma Biological Society (University of Texas, 1942); San Antonio Council of Presidents (member 1936, vice president 1945–47); San Antonio Museum Association (charter member 1923, honorary life member); San Antonio Art League, 1923 (honorary director, 1960); San Antonio Conservation Society (1924); City Federation of Women's Clubs (1925); Historic Buildings Foundation (honorary life member, 1943); San Antonio Garden Center (1942); San Antonio Flower Association (honorary member, 1950); San Antonio Science Club (founder 1925, president 1929); and San Antonio Hand Weaver's Guild (honorary member, 1945). She was also a well-known lecturer on natural history throughout her career. She wrote several scholarly books and numerous articles on botany. She authored *Wild Flowers of San Antonio and Vicinity*, 1922; *Texas Wild Flowers*, 1928; *Texas Cacti*, with Robert Runyon, published by the Texas Academy of Science, 1931; *Cactus Culture*, 1937; *Outdoor Adventures*, with Charles Gable, 1936; and *The Story of the Witte Memorial Museum, 1922–1960*, with Bess Carroll Woolford, 1966.

Quillin retired as the Witte Memorial Museum director in May 1960, and on October 30 of that year the city of San Antonio paid tribute to her by declaring it “Ellen S. Quillin Day.” There was a large reception in her honor at the museum. The city council appointed her director emeritus in recognition of her long and faithful service, and Trinity University presented her with a citation. She died of an apparent heart attack at her home in San Antonio on May 6, 1970, and was survived by her husband. She was buried in Sunset Memorial Park in San Antonio. Dr. William A. Burns, her successor as director, stated: "Without the foresight, administrative ability and dedication of Mrs. Quillin, there would be no Witte Museum. She is one of the great museologists of our century."

Grave of Ellen Schulz Quillin.
On January 31, 1938, nearly 12,000 San Antonio pecan shellers, mostly Hispanic women, walked off their jobs. A three-month strike followed, in which the pecan shellers confronted both management and San Antonio politics. In the 1930s Texas pecans accounted for approximately 50 percent of the nation's production. San Antonio was the Texas shelling center because half the commercial Texas pecans grew within a 250-mile radius of the city. The pecan-shelling industry was one of the lowest-paid industries in the United States, with a typical wage ranging between two and three dollars a week. In the nearly 400 shelling factories in San Antonio the contracting system was prevalent; the large firms controlled the supply of nuts as well as the prices for shelling. Working conditions were abysmal—illumination was poor, inside toilets and washbowls were nonexistent, and ventilation was inadequate. Fine brown dust from the pecans permeated the air, and the high tuberculosis rate of San Antonio—148 deaths for each 100,000 persons, compared to the national average of fifty-four—was blamed at least partially on the dust. Women constituted the majority of the workforce. The Southern Pecan Shelling Company, owned by Julius Seligmann, shelled one-fourth to one-third of the nation's entire crop and dominated the San Antonio market. The company had begun in San Antonio in 1926. Before that year machines had cracked and graded the nuts; the separation of the meats from the shells was the only operation performed by hand. The Southern Pecan Shelling Company replaced all machines with hand shelling, cracking, and shaking. The labor union representing the pecan shellers was the
International Pecan Shellers Union No. 172, a chapter of United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America, which belonged to the newly-formed Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The original strike leader was Emma Tenayuca, a well-known figure in San Antonio politics and the dominant force in the Worker's Alliance, a national organization formed by the Communist party during the Great Depression. Tenayuca, whose husband, Homer Brooks, was a former Communist party gubernatorial candidate, had led sit-downs at City Hall and battled pay cuts in the Work Projects Administration (WPA), as well as the unequal distribution of WPA jobs, the discriminatory removal of Mexican American families from public relief roles, and the illegal deportation of U.S. citizens of Mexican descent by the United States Border Patrol (see MEXICAN AMERICANS AND REPATRIATION). She was an articulate leader who offered her help at the request of the striking workers. However, union leaders feared that her controversial political ties would damage public opinion. On February 7 Donald Henderson, president of the United Cannery union, arrived to direct the strike. He soon passed this responsibility to CIO organizer J. Austin Beasley and withdrew from formal leadership of the strike, while continuing to play a major role in the day-to-day activities.

The strike began because of a pay cut. The wages of shellers who had earned six or seven cents a pound (six cents for pieces, seven cents for halves) were reduced to five and six cents a pound. Wages for crackers were cut from fifty cents to forty cents for each 100 pounds. San Antonio officials strongly opposed the strike. More than 700 arrests were made. Owen Kilday, chief of police, stated under oath that the strike was part of a "Red plot" to gain control of the West Side of San Antonio. George Phillip Lambert, an activist in the strike, claimed that the political leaders feared the Mexican Americans would become aware of their own power. Picketing of the 400 factories was complicated by police actions. Kilday claimed that there was no
strike and dispersed demonstrators and arrested picketers. In one week in February, 90 male pecan shellers were arrested and imprisoned with 200 other prisoners in a county facility designed to hold 60. The strike received national and international attention because of the mass arrests. At Governor James Allred's urging, the Texas Industrial Commission investigated possible violations of civil rights in San Antonio and found the police interference with the right of peaceful assembly to be unjustified.

In March 1938 both sides agreed to arbitration. An initial settlement of seven and eight cents was increased when Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which established a minimum wage of twenty-five cents an hour. Concerned that the minimum-wage law would encourage remechanization of the industry in Texas and thereby displace thousands of shellers, the Congress of Industrial Organizations joined with the employers' association in seeking an exemption of pecan workers from provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Department of Labor, however, denied the exemption, and over the next three years cracking machines replaced more than 10,000 shellers in San Antonio shops.
Valmo Charles Bellinger, African-American newspaper publisher, community leader, and political boss in San Antonio, was born in Lockhart, Texas, on October 12, 1899, to Charles Bellinger and Celestine (Pelliman) Bellinger. He was the second of twelve children and one of only five to live to maturity. Around 1905 the family moved to San Antonio, and eventually, the Bellingers became recognized as one of San Antonio’s most influential black families.

Valmo Bellinger grew up as a devout Catholic. He attended St. Peter Claver Junior High School (now known as the Healy-Murphy Center) in San Antonio, the first Catholic school for African Americans in Texas. Then he was sent to St. Thomas Academy, in St. Paul, Minnesota, for high school. He started college at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Then he attended the University of Pennsylvania, and finally Harvard University.

When Valmo completed his formal education, he returned to San Antonio, where he became an assistant to his father (and ultimately his successor). One day in 1931, Charles Bellinger asked Valmo to visit the office of the San Antonio Inquirer, the only black newspaper in town, to place a full-page ad in the paper for a political candidate that Charles was backing. The publisher, G. W. Bouldin, refused to run the ad. Valmo became enraged and said: “You just bought yourself some competition!” Thus, the San Antonio Register was born.

Valmo Bellinger opened his San Antonio Register newspaper office in the same building that housed the office of the Inquirer. He had no experience in the newspaper business, but he was able to staff the office with employees who were talented. Bellinger also hired a bookkeeper, Josephine Crawford. She was interested in learning all she could about newspaper work and had an innate curiosity and positive attitude. Within three
Upon the death of Charles Bellinger, Valmo inherited his father's political machine and influence. In 1941 when Maury Maverick was in the heat of a mayoral race, in a fleeting moment he referred to Valmo Bellinger as a “black baboon”; that was a watershed political blunder that very likely cost him the election. In 1959 when Bellinger was asked about his political power, he said, “I don’t tell people how to vote, I suggest. Nobody can be a political boss anymore—those days are over.” The Bellingers ran the paper for nearly half a century without missing a publishing deadline. In late 1978 a few disgruntled employees staged a walkout, causing the newspaper to falter and go into limbo for several weeks. Then Bellinger suffered two life-threatening heart attacks in 1979. Due to Valmo’s serious illness, the Bellingers were forced to sell the Register. In April 1979 they sold it to Edwin Glossen, who continued to publish the paper until it closed in 2004. Bellinger donated an archive of the San Antonio Register to the University of Texas at San Antonio’s John Peace Library in 1979. The archive consisted of 22,000 issues and offered an almost complete run of issues from 1945 to 1978. Steven Boyd, an assistant professor of history at UTSA said in 1979, “There are virtually no complete collections of black newspapers in the southwest and only two or three in the United States.”

After this serious illness, Bellinger withdrew from most of his active involvement in San Antonio politics, though he lived for many more years. In 1984 the San Antonio city council honored him with the "Benefactor de la Comunidad" award. Valmo Bellinger died in a nursing home on January 15, 1994, at ninety-four years of age.
Rodríguez et al. v. San Antonio ISD, a class-action suit, was a 1971 landmark case in which a federal district court declared the Texas school-finance system unconstitutional. The case followed the work of the School Improvement League, a San Antonio organization that battled racial and class inequities in the San Antonio schools although not through legal action. The state of Texas had not addressed school-finance reform since 1949, when the Gilmer-Aikin Laws were passed. On May 16, 1968, 400 students at Edgewood High School in San Antonio held a walkout and demonstration, and marched to the district administration office. Ninety percent of the students in the Edgewood district were of Mexican origin. Among the students' grievances were insufficient supplies and the lack of qualified teachers. The walkout induced parents to form the Edgewood District Concerned Parents Association, which sought to address problems in the schools. The group consisted of Alberta Snid, Demetrio Rodríguez, and other parents, mostly mothers. Rodríguez, a veteran and sheet-metal worker at Kelly Air Force Base, had worked with the American G.I. Forum, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and the Mexican-American Betterment Organization in San Antonio. William Velásquez, an activist in San Antonio, connected the parents' group with lawyer Arthur Gochman, who appealed unsuccessfully to the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund for assistance. On July 10, 1968, Rodríguez and seven other Edgewood parents filed on behalf of Texas schoolchildren who were poor or resided in school districts with low property-tax bases. They claimed their school district had one of the highest tax rates in the county but raised only $37 per pupil, while Alamo Heights, Bexar County's wealthiest district, raised $413 per student. Studies revealed that in Bexar
County the tax rate per $100 property value needed to equalize education funding was $0.68 for Alamo Heights but $5.76 for Edgewood.

Defendants included the State Board of Education, the commissioner of education, the state attorney general, and the Bexar County Board of Trustees. In January 1969 a three-judge federal district court was impaneled because Rodríguez challenged a state law on federal grounds. Gochman's argument rested upon two major claims that no federal court had accepted. The first was that the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution made education a "fundamental right," and the second was that poor and Mexican-American families were treated as a "suspect class." The state countered that the Texas legislature had authorized a study of school finance, and Judge Adrian Spears delayed hearing the case so that the Texas legislature might solve the issue. But the legislature closed its session in 1971 without acting. The three-judge court ruled on *Rodríguez* in December 23, 1971. The panel held the Texas school-finance system unconstitutional under the "equal protection" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The state appealed, and the case went to the United States Supreme Court as *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodríguez*. The attorneys general of twenty-five states filed amicus briefs on Rodríguez's side.

On March 21, 1973, the Supreme Court ruled five to four against Rodríguez, stating that the system of school finance did not violate the federal constitution and that the issue should be resolved by the state of Texas. It also held that the state would not be required to subsidize poorer school districts. This ruling in effect produced additional legal barriers to equalization. The court denied a rehearing on April 23, 1973. Justice Thurgood Marshall, however, called the decision "a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of educational opportunity." Rodríguez responded to the decision, "The poor people have lost again." Later in the same year 1973 José A. Cárdenas, superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District, organized Texans for Educational Excellence (later called the *Intercultural Development Research Association*), which devoted attention to school-finance reform. The battle for educational equity continued with *Edgewood ISD v. Kirby* in 1984.
Henry B. González, longtime Democratic congressman and civil rights crusader, was born Enrique Barbosa Prince de González on May 3, 1916, in San Antonio, one of six children of Mexican immigrants Leonides González and Genoveva Barbosa Prince de González. Henry B., as he was known, grew up speaking Spanish, but attended public schools and graduated from Jefferson High School in 1935; the story goes that he used to practice English and oratory in front of a mirror at home, and was reading Descartes and Carlyle by age sixteen. He continued his education at the University of Texas at Austin and at San Antonio College, while he worked for a time for an exterminating company for five dollars a week, and received a law degree from St. Mary’s University in San Antonio in 1943. He served as a civilian cable and radio censor for military and naval intelligence during World War II. Upon his return to San Antonio after the war he worked as an assistant juvenile probation officer and rose to become the chief probation officer of the Bexar County Juvenile Court. He was hired in 1947 as executive assistant of the Pan American Progressive Association and from 1947 to 1951 helped his father run a translation service in San Antonio.

In 1953 González became the first Mexican American elected to the San Antonio City Council and served as mayor pro-tempore for part of his first term. On the council he became known for speaking out against segregation of public facilities. In 1956 he was elected to the state Senate and became the first Mexican American to serve in that body in at least 110 years, and the following year he attracted national attention when he and Sen. Abraham Kazen mounted the longest filibuster in the history of the Texas legislature (thirty-six hours). The filibuster succeeded in killing eight out of ten
racial segregation bills aimed at circumventing the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. González ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1958 and finished third in the race behind Price Daniel and W. Lee O’Daniel with 18.6 percent of the vote despite spending a mere $1,600 on his campaign. González was a staunch admirer of John F. Kennedy and during the 1960 presidential campaign served as co-chairman of the national Viva Kennedy vote drive.

In 1961 González ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate but later that year notched yet another first when he became the first Mexican American from Texas elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in a special race to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Paul J. Kilday. González was assigned to the Committee on Banking and Currency during his first term. He served in the House for thirty-seven tempestuous and occasionally controversial years, and his unapologetic liberalism and fearlessness often led him into what seemed to be quixotic fights, such as calling for the impeachment of three Republican presidents, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush. In 1963 he shoved West Texas congressman Ed Foreman, who called him a “pinko” on the House floor, and in 1986 he punched a man in a San Antonio restaurant who called him a communist. But his devotion to the people of the Twentieth District, symbolized by the sign outside his congressional office that read “This Office Belongs to the People of Bexar County,” was absolute. “He was a really important figure for our community,” recalled one admirer after his death. “Un abrecaminos, you would say. Making way for others.”

During his time in Congress, González became an expert on the nation’s banking system and on housing for the poor. He helped pass a number of bills during the New Frontier and Great Society in the early and mid-1960s, including the Housing Act of 1964, and supported the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He also campaigned to put an end to the bracero program, under which foreign workers harvested agricultural crops,
As a member of the powerful House Banking Committee, González helped draft savings-and-loan bailout legislation and exposed the industry’s excesses during the 1980s. He was elected chairman in 1989 and used that position to assail the policies of the Federal Reserve system. He also opened investigations that led to the resignation of the government’s chief thrift regulator and to the conviction of Charles Keating, despite the fact that the hearings revealed that five U.S. senators (the so-called “Keating Five”) had close ties to the S&L owner. “Henry was always fighting for the little guy against the big creditor villains,” recalled an economist who had followed his career. In 1992 González charged that the administration of President George H. W. Bush had helped Iraq build up its military before the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which sparked the Persian Gulf War, and had subsequently tried to cover up its links to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. The ensuing scandal was known as “Iraqgate.”

In 1994 González won the Profile in Courage Award from the John F. Kennedy Library for his investigations of the S&L industry and the Iraq scandal, but his stubborn independence and refusal to compromise kept González something of an outsider in Washington despite his years of service. “I stand before you today, accepted, but seen by some as an inconvenient and unwelcome obstacle,” he told a closed meeting of House Democrats in 1996. González’s last term was marred by health problems. In July 1997 doctors discovered that a dental infection had spread and damaged a heart valve, and he subsequently spent more than half of his two-year term recuperating in San Antonio, sparking criticism that he was unable to fulfill his responsibilities to his constituents and ought to resign. When González finally retired from Congress in 1998, his son Charlie, a former district judge, won the election to succeed him. Henry B. González died on November 28, 2000, in San Antonio, and was survived by his wife, the former Bertha Cuellar, and eight children. He was buried in San Fernando Cemetery II in San Antonio. The Henry B. González Convention Center in San Antonio is named in his honor.
Julian Onderdonk, landscape artist, son of Emily Wesley Rogers (Gould) Onderdonk and Robert Jenkins Onderdonk, was born Robert Julian Onderdonk in San Antonio on July 30, 1882. His parents were artists, and his father was also an instructor in art. From early childhood Julian showed definite artistic talent; he marveled at colors and reflections and drew sketches. His father, Robert, served as his first teacher. In the late 1890s young Onderdonk attended West Texas Military Academy, where he also taught art in order to pay his tuition. In 1900 Julian was an art teacher at Laurel Heights School.

In 1901 a loan from San Antonio banker G. Bedell Moore allowed Julian Onderdonk to go to New York to study. He attended the Art Students League, where he studied under Kenyon Cox and later Frank Vincent DuMond. In summer 1901 Onderdonk studied with American Impressionist William Merritt Chase (who had also taught Robert Onderdonk) at his Shinnecock Hills Summer School of Art in Southampton on Long Island. Chase encouraged his talents as a landscape painter and had a profound influence on Onderdonk. At some point, he also studied with Robert Henri. Julian Onderdonk married Gertrude Shipman, a native of New York, on June 18, 1902. They had two children—daughter Adrienne (born in New York in 1903) and son Robert (born in San Antonio in 1909).

In New York, Onderdonk was soon experiencing economic difficulties. Although his ability was recognized, his earnings were small. In 1904 he and his family moved to Staten Island, where he briefly taught on his own under the name of the Onderdonk School of Art. By this time, he also knew a business associate, Charles E. Tunison,
who acted as a broker. Onderdonk supplied paintings to Tunison who sold them to department stores. This gave the artist a very modest but steady source of income to support his family. The years of 1904 to 1909 proved to be a particularly prolific period of output for Onderdonk, but he used pseudonyms such as Chas. Turner, Chase Turner, Elbert H. Turner, and Roberto Vasquez, to sign his works. Only decades later, did art historians discover the breadth of Onderdonk’s New York paintings, and this ongoing study has served to broaden the artist’s reputation beyond his Texas identity.

In 1906 Onderdonk took a salaried position organizing art exhibitions for the Dallas State Fair, a seasonal job he retained for a number of years. In November 1909 the Onderdonk family moved from New York to San Antonio. The 1910 census records that he and his wife, their daughter Adrienne, and their infant son Robert were living with extended family at his parents’ home at 128 W. French Place in San Antonio. Here, in the expanse of Bexar County’s hill country, Julian Onderdonk employed his en plein air (“in the open air”) philosophy, that his mentor William Merritt Chase espoused, and did his best work as an interpreter of life and scenes in his native locale. About 1911 he took an interest in bluebonnets, which became his most popular and marketable landscapes. His many paintings include Sunlight and Shadow (1910), Spring Morning (1911), Bluebonnet Field (1912), Blue Bonnets in Texas (1915), Road to the Hills (1918), and Bluffs on the Guadalupe River (1921).

Following his father’s death in 1917, Julian became his successor in promoting art in the city, and he actively spoke at luncheons, presented awards, and participated in other civic functions. Reproductions of his landscapes, including bluebonnets, were
later sold to tourists at Joske’s department store in San Antonio. At the peak of his success, when his paintings were bringing remunerative returns, Onderdonk died of an acute intestinal obstruction and appendicitis on October 27, 1922, in San Antonio. He was buried in Alamo Masonic Cemetery.

His last paintings, *Dawn in the Hills* and *Autumn Tapestry*, painted in 1922, were shown in the 1922 exhibition of the National Academy of Design in New York. Onderdonk was a member of the Salmagundi Club of New York, Allied Artists of America, and the [San Antonio Art League](http://www.sanantoniomuseumart.org/). When the [Witte Memorial Museum](http://www.wittermemorialmuseum.org/) opened a few years later, his sister [Eleanor](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/1922/) served as its first curator, and the museum helped promote Onderdonk’s wildflower landscapes. His works have been presented in numerous Texas art museums as well as other galleries across the nation. When President George W. Bush lived in the White House, among his choices of artwork were several works by Julian Onderdonk. In the early twenty-first century, the Texas Impressionist artist’s landscapes were still in high demand among collectors and commanded up to several hundred thousand dollars.

![Painting, *Dawn in the Hills* by Julian Onderdonk.](https://example.com) 

*Painting, *Dawn in the Hills* by Julian Onderdonk.*

*Courtesy of the Witte Museum.*
The Majestic Theatre, located at 224 E. Houston Street in downtown San Antonio, first opened on June 14, 1929. It was one of the last atmospheric theaters designed and built by John Eberson for theater magnate Karl St. John Hoblitzelle of Interstate Amusement Company. The two men had previously collaborated on building Majestic Theatres in other cities, including Houston and Dallas. The $3 million San Antonio building housed an auditorium, with a seating capacity of more than 3,700, that was the largest movie house in the South and the second largest in the nation. The Majestic, with the latest lighting and sound equipment, a 3,500-gallon artesian well, and elevator access to balcony and mezzanine areas, was also the first fully air-conditioned theater in Texas.

Exterior features of the Majestic include an expansive cast iron canopy, a theater marquee, and a decorated theater box office made of marble and cast iron. The building has fourteen stories topped by a penthouse. The “Majestic” vertical sign, lit with 2,400 lamps, was seventy-six feet in length and began at the seventh-floor level.

Upon entering the theater, patrons undoubtedly find themselves transported into a world of fantasy. The atmospheric theater blends Spanish Mission, Baroque, and Mediterranean architectural styles. The lobby has inlaid tiles, copper lanterns, statues, painted murals, tapestries, a large aquarium, and opens up into two stories. Antique furnishings were purchased from an estate in Tuscany; however, many of the furnishings were sold throughout the years by various owners. Every detail was important to Eberson and, as with his other “Majestic” theaters, he created the feeling
of being outdoors—perhaps in the courtyard of a castle. The vaulted auditorium ceiling painted blue with light bulbs for twinkling stars and moving clouds projected by a Viennese Brenograph machine, simulates a nighttime sky. *National Geographic* was consulted about the position of real stars before the theater opened.

Stuffed birds were used extensively; there were white doves caught in flight, pigeons, colored parrots, wild Texas turkeys, and a rare large white peacock with a spreading tail span and height of ten feet. Birds are still perched on gables and eves. Spanish cypress trees were imported from Italy, and palms came from South America. Decorating continued with the use of orange, azalea, magnolia and oleander trees, blooming cactus, grape vines, rose bushes, bougainvillea plants, and Texas bluebonnets. Auditorium side walls with arches, columns, scrolls, statues, and a bell tower create the façade of a castle or village. The impressive proscenium arch, flanked by towers that extend from the side walls, has cherubs spaced across the lower portion and is topped by a statue of Venus. There are rear and side balconies and a curved staircase that leads to the mezzanine.

The grand opening of the Majestic Theatre marked the beginning of “Prosperity Month” in San Antonio. Advertisements and articles in the June 9, 1929, issue of the *San Antonio Light* publicized opening festivities and highlighted features of the new theater. All seats for the first night were reserved and ticket prices ranged from $2 to $10. Proceeds were donated to the children’s hospital fund of the San Antonio Junior League and to Ella Austin Orphans Home. The opening show featured the movie *Follies of 1929* by Fox Movietime. There were also live performances by banjoist Don Galvan, an acrobatic group called the Seven Nelsons, Eddie Sauer and his Syncopators, and the popular *Jimmie Rodgers* who reportedly received eighteen curtain calls. Attendance during the first week was unprecedented according to a thank
you offered to the general public by Mr. Hoblitze in the June 23, 1929, Sunday edition of the *San Antonio Express*.

Beginning in 1929 a typical evening at the Majestic featured the showing of a main movie followed by vaudeville acts. In 1934 Cab Calloway and his Harlem Cotton Club show performed to record audiences. Entertainment stars often made appearances for movie openings, for example in the 1950s—the Western musical troupe the Sons of the Pioneers appeared for the film *Wagon Master*, James Stewart and Donald Crisp promoted the opening of *The Man from Laramie*, Anna Maria Alberghetti and others were present to promote *The Last Command*, Clayton Moore accompanied the world premiere of the *Lone Ranger*, Latin comic Pedro Gonzales-Gonzales was present for the premiere showing of *Strange Lady in Town*, and *Audie Murphy* rode a Texas stallion down Houston Street to help launch San Antonio’s Frontier Festival and promote the world premiere of his film *To Hell and Back* which set box office attendance records.

In December 1974 the Majestic Theatre was officially closed. The next year it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 1976 the Hoblitze interests donated the theater to the newly-created Majestic Foundation. Various performing arts events continued to be held at the venue for a number of years.

The city of San Antonio purchased the Majestic building in 1988. The nonprofit organization Las Casas (the Foundation for Cultural Arts in San Antonio) was formed, and its first priority was to restore the Majestic Theatre as close as possible to its original 1929 design. Las Casas raised $4.5 million for the restoration which was completed in 1989. The renovated theater, with a seating capacity of 2,264 and major sound system improvements, became home to the *San Antonio Symphony* as well
as a popular venue for concert artists, touring Broadway shows, and other performing arts events. The San Antonio Symphony performed Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, “Ode to Joy” on September 14, 1989, as the first program in the restored theater during “Majestic Week.” Patrons were entertained by Rosemary Clooney and Johnny Mathis at the opening gala on September 19. Don Galvan, at age eighty-seven, returned to the city for the reopening celebrations. The Texas Historical Commission recognized the theater as a Texas Historic Landmark in 1991 and placed a plaque on the building in September 1992. On April 19, 1993, the Majestic was designated a National Historic Landmark.

Due to limited physical space on its small stage which had a depth of twenty-seven feet, the Majestic was unable to accommodate large productions such as touring mega-musicals, which were growing in popularity and were viewed as a good source of potential income for the community. With the acquisition of the Little Brady Building in 1995, a proposal to expand the stage was finally able to move forward. The stagehouse expansion project, completed in September 1996 at a cost of around $4 million, required construction, demolition, and the reconfiguring of structural walls between the Majestic Theatre and the adjoining Charline McCombs Empire Theatre and the Little Brady Building. In addition to a forty-foot-deep stage, new construction included the installation of sound-isolation barriers, an acoustical door, a new hydraulic lift, and a freight elevator. The first mega-musical presented on the expanded stage was Miss Saigon in June 1997.

Arts Center Enterprises, Inc., (ACE) maintains and runs the Majestic Theatre. From 1989 to 2011, the theater hosted over 4,200 events with more than five million patrons in attendance. The venue served the San Antonio Symphony into 2014 before the organization moved to its new home at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. In the 2010s the Majestic was home to the Broadway in San Antonio series. The theater presented an array of performers that included concert artists, top-name musicians, and comedians. Musicians B.B. King, Tony Bennett, Wynton Marsalis, Lyle Lovett, Bonnie Raitt, Sting, and Kenny Rogers—to name a few—as well as comedians Jerry Seinfeld, Kathy Griffin, Chris Rock, and George Lopez have performed at the theater. The Majestic has hosted top Broadway musicals, including Cats, Camelot, Jersey Boys, Les Miserables, Jesus Christ Superstar, Lion King, Wicked, and Phantom of the Opera.
Dionicio Rodríguez, artist, son of Catarino Rodríguez and Luz Alegría, was born in Toluca, capital of the state of México, on April 11, 1891. He perfected a secret process in which he carved chemically-treated reinforced concrete so that it looked like wood. He produced a number of major works in San Antonio, including the Brackenridge Park concrete footbridge that simulates an arbor of woven wooden limbs. The fact that he traveled throughout the United States to work on commissions and did not speak English has presented challenges in precisely dating some of his works.

As a boy, Rodríguez moved with his family to Mexico City, and he later helped his father in the construction of brick houses. He also developed skills he later used in his art by working in a foundry and for an artist who produced imitation rocks. In the early 1920s Rodríguez reproduced ruins of ancient buildings in collaboration with Mexican architects and engineers and worked on major projects such as Chapultepec Castle, the presidential residence in Mexico City. He briefly lived in Monterrey before going to Laredo, Texas, where he worked with fellow artisan Maximo Cortés on casting cement embellishments for a school. About 1924 Rodríguez moved to San Antonio to work on the home (named Quinta Urrutia) of Aureliano Urrutia, a prominent physician and surgeon. Rodríguez also did work at Urrutia’s nearby fifteen-acre estate—Miraflores. (Though the home was demolished in 1962, many of Rodríguez’s works at Miraflores survived and were later relocated or donated to various institutions.)

Urrutia most likely introduced Rodríguez to Charles Baumberger, president of the San Antonio Portland Cement Company (now Alamo Cement Company), who became an important patron and commissioned Rodríguez to construct a number of projects in San Antonio. In this capacity, Rodríguez produced the faux bois (“false wood”) bus stop...
at Broadway and Patterson in Alamo Heights. He created an impressive fence and fish pond eighteen feet in diameter and covered with a concrete roof resembling thatch (or palapa) and surrounded by an arcaded walkway at the site of the new office complex at Alamo Cement Company in Alamo Heights. Several examples of Rodríguez's work extant in Brackenridge Park, including the pedestrian bridge (ca. 1926), were possibly also commissioned by Baumberger. Rodríguez made a canopied table and bench now in Brackenridge Park that were originally installed at Alamo Plaza and numerous smaller pieces such as fountains, benches, tree-stump planters, trash receptacles, and lampposts that are scattered on public and private property throughout San Antonio. Other works by Rodríguez in San Antonio include light poles and benches (ca. 1930) at the Spanish Governor's Palace and a grotto and Stations of the Cross at the Shrine of St. Anthony de Padua. Other artists worked with Rodríguez during the course of his career, most notably Maximo Cortés, whom Rodríguez encouraged to move to San Antonio, but most art scholars agree that Rodríguez was the “most skilled practitioner” of his craft. He received commissions across the state beginning in the later 1920s and extending into the 1940s, and his work can be found in Comfort, Port Arthur, Beaumont, Houston, Longview, Dallas, Castroville, and other towns.

During the 1930s Rodríguez received commissions to produce his art in other states. He worked for Arkansas developer Justin Matthews and sculpted pieces for three parks in Little Rock. In his most innovative work for Matthews, Rodríguez worked with an architect to design a site to look like an abandoned mill, in which everything but the stone walls of the mill was molded from cement. From 1935 to 1939 he created a dozen works based on literary and Biblical themes for E. Clovis Hinds in the Memorial Park Cemetery in Memphis, Tennessee. The most outstanding of these is a massive grotto, the inside of which is studded with crystals and decorated with ten
sculpted and painted scenes from the life of Christ. In 1936 and 1937 he created concrete sculptures at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, Maryland. Other examples of Rodríguez's work have been found in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Hot Springs, Arkansas; Ann Arbor, Michigan; New York City; and Clayton, New Mexico.

Back in San Antonio in 1942, Rodríguez, with Maximo Cortés, completed an entrance gate to the Japanese Tea Garden in Brackenridge Park. Characterized as one of Rodríguez’s “most exuberant works,” the gateway includes the lettering “Entrance to Chinese Tea Garden,” which reflects the anti-Japanese sentiment during World War II.

His inclusion of such painstaking details as insect holes, peeling bark, and broken-off branches in his work, which he called el trabajo rústico (“rustic work”), demonstrates a highly refined aesthetic as well as technical mastery of his medium. He began each piece by fashioning a metal framework, to which he applied cement that had been mixed without sand. He then sculpted the moistened cement with his hands or simple tools such as a fork, knife, spoon, or twig. He stained the cement while it was still wet, using chemicals such as copperas, sulfuric acid, muriatic acid, iron oxide, saltpeter, and lampblack for various tints. Rodríguez never used models or preparatory sketches. Though he trained workers to assist him on his commissions, many of whom have continued to work in his style, he jealously guarded his special techniques, particularly those relating to the tinting process, with the result that none of his assistants has approached his level of craftsmanship.

After 1942 Rodríguez, suffering from diabetes and failing eyesight, limited his travel and output. Limited materials of steel and concrete due to the war effort also curtailed
his work, especially for larger projects. For the rest of his life he lived in San Antonio at his “tree” house which he had built as a “shelter being like both a tree and a cave” on Guadalupe Street about 1935. Reportedly he married and divorced twice in his life, but specific information is sketchy. His death certificate lists his marital status as “Widow[ed].” Dionicio Rodríguez died at Robert B. Green Hospital in San Antonio on December 16, 1955, and was buried in San Fernando Cemetery No. 2; he had no immediate survivors.

During the 1980s several scholars became interested in Rodríguez's sculptures, and his pieces in Little Rock were awarded a National Register of Historic Places designation in 1986. His work in Memphis was added to the National Register in 1991. In the early 1990s groups such as the San Antonio Conservation Society began efforts to preserve some of Rodríguez's works. Private individuals purchased the Alamo Cement Company property and in 1995 opened the Stone Werks Caffe and Bar, which featured his work. In 2004 the sculpture by Dionicio Rodríguez in Texas received a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This included the bridge in Brackenridge Park, gate at the Japanese Tea Garden, Stations of the Cross and grotto at the Shrine of St. Anthony de Padua, and other works in San Antonio. Carlos Cortés, son of Maximo Cortés and the great-nephew by marriage to Rodríguez, carried on the tradition of *faux bois* in San Antonio in the 2010s.
Marion Koogler McNay, art collector, philanthropist, and founder of the Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum at San Antonio, was born at De Graff, Ohio, on February 7, 1883, the only child of Dr. Marion A. and Clara V. (Lippincott) Koogler. A year later the family moved to El Dorado, Kansas, where Koogler invested in many acres of grazing land, later the source of the Koogler oil fortune, which Marion inherited at the death of her parents. She studied art at the University of Kansas (1900–1902) and at the Art Institute of Chicago. She joined her parents in their retirement in 1912 in Marion, Ohio. Her marriage to Don Denton McNay, a railway manager and sergeant in the United States Army, on December 9, 1917, ended ten months later with his death from Spanish influenza in Florida. Through four subsequent marriages and divorces she retained the name of her first husband. She was married to Charles Newton Phillips, a Marion banker, from 1921 to 1925; to Donald Taylor Atkinson, a San Antonio ophthalmologist, from 1926 to 1936; to Victor Higgins, a Chicago artist working in New Mexico, from 1937 to 1940; and to Adelbert E. Quest, a Chicago art dealer, in 1940–41. She had no children.

McNay moved to San Antonio in 1926 and after her marriage to Dr. Atkinson began construction of a Spanish colonial mansion designed by Atlee and Robert Ayres on acreage called Sunset Hills, at the intersection of Austin Highway and New Braunfels Avenue. The mansion, completed in 1929, housed her growing collection of American watercolors, French Impressionist paintings, and art objects. She herself designed some of the mansion's tiling and stenciled ceilings. She was a frequent summer visitor to Taos and Santa Fe and acquired numerous works by artists.
painting in the New Mexico area. Her patronage extended to the art of the Pueblo Indians, and her collection of their crafts and of primitive Spanish colonial art is part of the permanent collection of the museum.

In 1943 a proposed congressional bill provided for exploration of Pueblo lands preliminary to the construction of a dam on the Rio Grande. This project, thought by conservationists to endanger several pueblos and their shrines, was defeated largely due to Marion's efforts. In her later years McNay devoted much of her time to the directorship of the San Antonio Art Institute, the former Witte Museum School of Art, which was housed in an aviary on the grounds of her home. The San Antonio Art Institute declared bankruptcy and closed in 1990.

Although her religious background was Presbyterian, McNay was converted to Catholicism under the spiritual guidance of the Rev. Peter M. Baque. Among her many charities, the foremost was the Missionary Servants of Christ the Master and St. Anthony, a lay society of Catholic women. After Baque's death, Marion McNay commissioned Texas sculptor Karl J. (Charles) Umlauf to do a large aluminum crucifix, which was placed at the head of Father Baque's grave in the Cemetery of the Sisters of St. Anthony in San Antonio. Jessie Marion Koogler McNay died of pneumonia on April 13, 1950, in a San Antonio hospital, and was buried next to Father Baque's grave. Her bequest to the sisters was generous, but the bulk of her estate was left in trust for the conversion of her home into a museum of modern art, the first of its kind in San Antonio.
The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center is a multidisciplinary, nonprofit arts organization dedicated to developing and promoting Latin-American and indigenous arts, located at 1300 Guadalupe, in the heart of San Antonio's West Side barrio. The center developed from Performance Artists Nucleus, Incorporated (PAN), which formed in 1979 to unite various Hispanic arts groups.

In the early 1980s Rolando Rios, Ralph Garcia, and other leaders of PAN determined that the organization needed a permanent facility close to the Hispanic community it wished to serve. The historic Teatro Guadalupe, which operated as the West Side's most opulent movie theater from 1940 until it fell into disrepair and was closed in 1970, presented an ideal site for an arts center. Councilman Bernardo Eureste persuaded the city to purchase the land where the theater was located and sublease the theater from developer William Schlansker, who raised $1 million for the theater's reconstruction. The Reyna–Caragonne architectural firm subsequently drafted reconstruction plans for the theater.

During this period of negotiation and construction PAN changed its name to Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center. The center, initially headquartered in Teatro Guadalupe and later in the Progreso Drugstore adjacent to the theater, sponsored art classes and performances throughout San Antonio. In the spring of 1984 the reconstruction of the theater was completed. The 400-seat facility, a hybrid of
southwestern mission style and Art Deco ornamentation, is equipped for stage and screen presentations and includes a small art gallery. The offices, classrooms, and graphics department are located in the Progreso Drugstore. The two buildings provide a total of 20,000 square feet of space.

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center sponsors programming in six major areas: visual arts, music, literature, film, theater, and dance. With its major emphasis on education, the center offers a wide array of classes and workshops in visual arts, music, literature, theater, and dance on a year-round basis. Such artists as Valerio Longoria, Jorge Piña, and Kathy Vargas have taught the classes, which are offered at low cost.

The visual arts program organizes exhibitions throughout the year, featuring local, national, and international artists. Each year the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center sponsors the Juried Women's Art Exhibit and an arts and crafts bazaar called Hecho a Mano. During its early years the center cosponsored two exhibitions with the San Antonio Museum of Art: *Art Among Us / Arte Entre Nosotros* (1986), an exhibition featuring Mexican folk art from San Antonio; and *Influence: An Exhibition of Works by Contemporary Hispanic Artists Living in San Antonio, Texas* (1987). The center has also organized exhibitions with San Antonio's Instituto Cultural Mexicano and Appalshop, a center devoted to Appalachian culture located in Whitesburg, Kentucky. The visual arts program supports local artists by making its facilities available to them and by offering technical assistance, special workshops, and round-table discussions for the exchange of information. In the 2010s the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center initiated a new project called the Artist Lab in which local visual artists were selected every two years through an application process. The chosen applicants were then provided “a place for showing and selling art, an educational experience in both creative and business development, and an opportunity to build new networks between local artists and the national artistic field.”

San Antonio’s Teatro Guadalupe, the first headquarters of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, was renovated in 1984.
The center's Xicano Music Program presents performances in parks and at schools, churches, and other community centers. Since 1982 the music program has sponsored the annual Tejano Conjunto Festival in San Antonio, the largest festival of its kind in the United States. The event presents an average of more than twenty conjuntos and has featured such major performers as Ruben Vela, Los Dos Gilbertos, Tony de la Rosa, and Esteban Jordan, along with emerging talents. Each year at the festival several pioneering performers are inducted into the Conjunto Music Hall of Fame.

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center offers a strong literature program, with frequent literary performances and annual residencies, in which several writers teach workshops, give public lectures and readings, and advise area writers and poets. Many prominent Hispanic writers have participated in the program in the past, including Norma Alarcón, Rolando Hinojosa, Raul Salinas, and Alurista. Since 1987 the center has sponsored the Inter-American Book Fair and Literary Festival, which features readings, workshops, public forums, and bookselling. Such prominent writers as Carlos Fuentes, Maya Angelou, Maxine Hong Kingston, Isabel Allende, Alice Walker, Oscar Hijuelos, and Robert Bly have appeared at the Book Fair. In 2012 the center took on the role as organizer for the Macondo Workshop from the event’s originator, writer and poet Sandra Cisneros. The Macondo Workshop brings together a “community of poets, novelists, journalists, performance artists, and creative writers” from the “local and national Latino literary scene.”

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center's cinema program focuses on Spanish-language and Latino-theme films and videos. The center regularly presents series featuring films from Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Argentina, and other Latin-American countries. Since 1983 the center has sponsored San Antonio Cine Festival, the country's longest-running Latino film and video festival, which began in 1975 under the sponsorship of Oblate College in San Antonio. The center's theater-arts program presents a season of plays annually,
The CineFestival is the longest-running Latino film and video festival. Courtesy of KRTU of Trinity University.

many of which are original works commissioned from established and aspiring playwrights.

The center places an emphasis on bicultural or bilingual productions. Productions by the center's resident acting company, Los Actores de San Antonio, are supplemented by performances mounted by major Hispanic theatrical troupes such as Teatro de la Esperanza of Santa Barbara, California. In 1991 the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center began a Hispanic dance program in response to the dissolution of several folkloric dance companies in San Antonio. Together with the Instituto Cultural Mexicano, the center offered studio space and dance classes. The Guadalupe Dance Company, a premier professional folklórico and flamenco group, was founded in 1992.

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center extended its services beyond the San Antonio community through the publication of *Tonantzin*, a periodical that included artwork, poetry and short stories, critical essays on all aspects of Latino culture, reviews of books, movies, records, and art exhibitions, interviews, and listings of cultural activities. The literature and artwork of Hispanic women, children, and prisoners have been featured in past issues of the magazine, which the center published several times a year through 2000. *Tonantzin* means "our mother" in Náhuatl, the common language of the Aztec empire, and thus linked the magazine and the center with the mestizo heritage of the Mexicanos, a source of pride to the Chicano movement.

A board of directors oversees the long-term development of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, while a staff of employees manages daily operations. The center
supports artists and benefits students and the public by hiring artists, musicians, writers, and actors to oversee its programs and teach classes. Each year about 700 volunteers assist the center at various events and festivals. Funding for the center is provided by the city of San Antonio, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Texas Committee for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Meadows Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Ewing Halsell Foundation, and other corporate and private contributors. In 2018 major sponsors included the city of San Antonio, the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, La Prensa, and H-E-B. Membership fees and revenue from programs also provide financial support for the center, which operated on a budget of more than $2 million by 2000. As one of the largest community-based organizations dedicated to Latin-American cultural arts in the United States, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center received a Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1986 and in 1987 won the Arts Organization of the Year award from the San Antonio Business Committee for the Arts. In January of 2002 the center was awarded a $1 million endowment grant by the Ford Foundation.

In the early 2000s the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center proceeded with plans for expansion in the community. By February 2003 the center had purchased a building located near the Guadalupe Theater to house a new school of arts. The center also implemented a program for renovations of the theater. In 2018 the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center campus included six buildings (Progreso Drugstore, Cesar Chavez Building, Museo Guadalupe, La Casita, Guadalupanita Café, and Teatro Guadalupe) with the historic theater standing as the centerpiece of the complex. On September 3, 2015, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center held a thirty-fifth anniversary gala. In 2018, in celebration of San Antonio’s Tricentennial, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center premiered the exhibit Common Currents as part of a collaboration of six art organizations to showcase 300 years of San Antonio history through visual and performance art.
An overlooked form of Texana and Americana music, San Antonio’s West Side Sound has been a mainstay of the River City and Texas for more than fifty years. This intercultural genre originated in the cantinas, house parties, and night spots on both the city’s east and west sides during the late 1950s. Young musicians of the city’s major ethnic groups—Chicano, African American and Anglo—went beyond the incipient racism of the period to create an original form of music that has developed from the horn-driven piano triplet R&B and rock-and-roll core to later incorporate conjunto and traditional country and western.

Early innovators included Charlie Alvarado and the Jives, the Pharaohs with Randy Garibay, Mando and the Chili Peppers with Mando Cavallero, the Dell-Kings with Frank Rodarte, Sunny and the Sunliners featuring Sunny Ozuna, Sonny Ace and the Twisters, Rudy T, the Royal Jesters, Denny Ezba and the Goldens with Augie Meyers, Doug Sahm, the Markays featuring Rocky Morales, Clifford Scott, as well as Spot Barnett’s 20th Century Orchestra. Each was heavily influenced by early rock-and-roll, rhythm and blues, as well as Louisiana swamp pop. Some of them were fortunate enough to back up national touring acts on the “Chitlin’ Circuit.” Doug Sahm, Spot Barnett, and Rocky Morales were regularly asked by Johnnie Phillips, owner of the Eastwood Country Club, to fill in temporary vacancies in the house band, and Morales became part of the Eastwood house band in the early 1960s backing up the likes of Redd Foxx’s comedy show and singer Della Reese. Barnett’s 20th Century Orchestra was the
house band at Club Ebony. During the late 1950s many of these artists recorded for the local Harlem label including Sahm on “Why, Why, Why,” Barnett with “20th Century Part 1,” and Charlie and the Jives’ “For the Rest of My Life.” The West Side Sound received national attention in both 1963 and 1965 with Sunny and the Sunliners’s (still going by the name Sunny and the Sunglows) rendition of “Talk to Me” in 1963, which earned them an appearance on American Bandstand, and the Sir Douglas Quintet’s “She’s About a Mover” in 1965.

While purists of the West Side Sound maintain that the genre has remained strictly within the saxophone tradition backed by piano triplets, it has been argued that the music developed to incorporate other intercultural forms. This became apparent in the early 1970s when some of the musicians, including Sahm and Meyers, ventured more openly into the traditional country and western music that they listened to and performed when they were children. (Sahm was billed as “Little Doug Sahm” when he was less than fourteen years old and had the opportunity to sit in Hank Williams’s lap while the legend played the pedal steel at a San Antonio gig.) This part of the growth of the genre came to fruition in Austin during the heyday of the Cosmic Cowboy scene, and Doug Sahm moved there to take advantage of that city’s original music style. Rocky Morales and other native-born San Antonio horn players also appeared with Sahm there. At the same time, conjunto music was wildly popular in San Antonio featuring the Alamo City’s conjunto impresario Flaco Jiménez. Sahm always greatly enjoyed that form of Mexican-American music and respected Jiménez and his music. In 1973 Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records invited Doug Sahm to record, and that he did on Doug Sahm and Band. Artists that appeared on that intercultural recording included San Antonio’s own Augie Meyers, bassist extraordinaire Jack Barber, Flaco Jiménez, songwriter and backing vocalist Atwood Allen, as well as music legends David “Fathead” Newman, Dr. John, and Bob Dylan. The album featured horn-driven piano triplets, traditional country and western, and conjunto. The West Side Sound may have
reached its apex of popularity during the 1990s. The late Randy Garibay became regionally popular with his three CD releases *Barbacoa Blues*, *Chicano Blues Man*, and *Invisible Society*. During the decade the Texas super group the Texas Tornados formed with Doug Sahm, Augie Meyers, Flaco Jiménez, and the legendary Freddy Fender. The group won a Grammy Award in 1991 for the song “Soy de San Luis” on their debut album *Texas Tornados*. Doug Sahm formed his Last Real Texas Blues Band with San Antonio musicians Rocky Morales, Sauce Gonzales, Jack Barber, and others, and the self-titled album was nominated for a Grammy in 1995. Flaco Jiménez toured internationally prompting the formation of conjunto groups in seemingly obtuse places as Japan and Holland. All of these recordings incorporate examples of early rock-and-roll and R&B, conjunto and other Latin styles, horn driven-triplets, and traditional country and western.

San Antonio’s West Side Sound stands as an example of the music that can be created when members of separate ethnic groups come together to collaborate. The music and the musicians can still be heard in the River City with the likes of Sauce Gonzales, the West Side Horns, Spot Barnett’s Eastwood Country Club Review, Frank Rodarte and his Chosen Vatos, Ernie Garibay & Cats Don’t Sleep, as well as Charlie Alvarado and Sonny Ace.
Don Albert, jazz trumpeter and bandleader, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on August 5, 1908. Nephew of New Orleans trumpeter Natty Dominique, Don Albert was born Albert Anité Dominique. He was the son of Georgiana and Ferdinand Dominique, a cigar maker, and was the eldest of five children. He grew up in the Seventh Ward, a predominately Creole community in New Orleans. From childhood he was influenced by the area’s brass bands. He studied trumpet with Milford Piron, a local orchestra leader, and began playing professionally at the age of fourteen. While still in his teens, Albert moved to Dallas in the mid-1920s. He toured the Southwest with the Dallas-based band of Alphonso Trent (1925) and the San Antonio-based band of Troy Floyd (1926 to 1929). He was featured on Floyd recordings “Shadowland Blues” and “Dreamland Blues.” In Christopher Wilkinson’s book, Jazz on the Road: Don Albert’s Musical Life, the author discusses the fusion of New Orleans jazz and the Texas blues style that developed during Albert’s tenure with the Troy Floyd band. On September 8, 1927, Albert married Hazel Augustine Gueringer in New Orleans. Eventually, they had a son and a daughter.

Albert debuted his own band, originally named Don Albert and His Ten Pals, at the State Fair in Dallas in 1929. They played as the house band at the Chicken Plantation in San Antonio and then worked as the house band at Shadowland in that city. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Albert worked out of Texas with his band, and he focused on managing and leading the group rather than performing on his trumpet. According to Albert McCarthy in Big Band Jazz, Albert’s band was “the first to use the word ‘swing’ in its title,” billing itself as “Don Albert and His Orchestra, America’s Greatest Swing Band.” Albert’s band toured twenty-four states during the 1930s, and
eight tunes recorded by the band for the Brunswick label in San Antonio in 1936 are included on *San Antonio Jazz*. Those recordings include the “Sheik of Araby” and “Liza.”

In the 1940s Albert served as a local promoter in San Antonio and then opened Don’s Keyhole, an integrated jazz club there. The establishment closed in 1948, and Albert moved to New Orleans for a time but eventually returned to San Antonio and opened a new integrated club. After repeated harassment from city authorities, Albert filed a restraining order against the city in a case that eventually went all the way to the Texas Supreme Court. Albert prevailed and continued to operate his club until the mid-1960s. During this time he also maintained a day job at Fort Sam Houston, where he worked as a civil servant for twenty-five years until his retirement in 1974.

Although he retired from performing around the late 1950s, he picked up his trumpet again later in life, playing and recording periodically. In 1969 he played at the New Orleans Jazz Festival. During the last years of his life, Albert, a Catholic, performed at Masses at San Antonio’s St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, where he was a longtime parishioner. He had a mild stroke in 1976 but did not seem to suffer any major effects from it. In 1978 Albert was seriously injured in an automobile accident, and Hazel, his wife of more than fifty years, was killed. Although Albert survived the accident, he never fully recovered from his injuries. He died of kidney failure in San Antonio on March 4, 1980. His funeral Mass was held at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, and he was buried in Meadowlawn Memorial Park in San Antonio.

Grave of Albert Anité Dominique. Courtesy of Aaron Stone.
Rosita Fernández, known as San Antonio’s First Lady of Song, a title bestowed on her in 1968 by Lady Bird Johnson, was born to Petra San Miguel and César Fernández on January 10, 1918, in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico. She attended school in Laredo, and moved with her family to San Antonio when she was nine years old. While still a youngster Fernández began to sing with her uncles’ Trio San Miguel. Together with them she performed in *carpas* (tent shows) across South and Central Texas during the 1920s and 1930s. Throughout her life the singer was guided by one simple career motive, “God gave me a voice that is pleasant to hear, and I want to share it.”

In 1932 when Fernández was fourteen, she won a local singing contest sponsored by WOAI Radio, giving her the opportunity to sing on the station’s *Gebhardt Chili Show*. Soon she recorded *radio* commercial jingles and was launched on a long career as a radio entertainer, a recording artist, and television and film actress. In 1938 she married Raúl Arturo Almaguer who became her manager. Her husband often translated English-language songs into Spanish. She was the first to perform live when WOAI launched its television station in 1949. From the late 1950s to the early 1980s she became best-known as the headliner for the Fiesta Noche del Rio at the Arneson River Theatre. Fernández also appeared in *A Night in Old San Antonio*, which was held each April. For many of her appearances, she performed in costumes that she created.

In addition to her singing and recording career, Fernández was an actress. She appeared in the 1960 film *The Alamo* and played the lead in the 1962 Disney film *Sancho, the Homing Steer*. She also played parts in *Seguin* and the CBS television movie *Three Hundred*. 
Miles for Stephanie (1981). On television she appeared with such stars as Garry Moore, Dean Martin, and Xavier Cugat. Fernández also performed for President Jimmy Carter, President and Lady Bird Johnson, Pope John Paul II, and Prince Charles.

Her talents and contributions to the world of music and to her beloved city of San Antonio were recognized with several honors and awards. The Arneson River Theatre Bridge was dedicated by city officials as Rosita’s Bridge in 1982. The San Antonio Musicians Hall of Fame inducted her in 1979, and Mayor Henry Cisneros named her Woman of the Year in 1983. The San Antonio Women’s Hall of Fame inducted her in 1984, and in 1987 the Conjunto Music Hall of Fame honored her contributions as a singer. The Friends of the San Antonio Public Library presented her with the Arts and Letters Award in 1997, and the Mexican American Unity Council awarded her the Albert Peña Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000. Fernández left yet another part of her legacy to San Antonio when she placed her papers at the University of Texas at San Antonio Library. The collection documents her career from her earliest professional appearances on radio to her work as a performer in television and films to her retirement in 1982. She was inducted into the Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame in 2005.

On May 2, 2006, Rosita Fernández died in San Antonio at the age of eighty-eight. Her funeral Mass was held at San Fernando Cathedral on May 6, 2006. She was buried beside her husband in San Fernando Cemetery No. 2.
The Jim Cullum Jazz Band, an internationally-known classic jazz band and the host group on Riverwalk Jazz radio broadcasts, was established as the Happy Jazz Band in San Antonio in 1962 by Jim Cullum, Sr. Cullum grew up in Dallas and cultivated his penchant for playing jazz by taking up the alto sax and later clarinet in the 1930s. In 1933 he was attending Southern Methodist University and performed in its first college band—an ensemble of approximately thirty to thirty-five players that included Cullum’s musical colleague and friend Garner Clark on cornet. After a year, Cullum dropped out of SMU, got married, and went to work in the wholesale grocery business. During the 1940s, however, he returned to music full-time and performed big band swing numbers and worked with, among others, Jack Teagarden and Jimmy Dorsey. This musical atmosphere had a profound effect on Cullum’s son, Jim, Jr.

In 1953 the family moved to San Antonio, where Cullum set his music aside and opened his own grocery business. While Cullum, Sr., settled into providing a steady income for the family, Cullum, Jr., was delving into his father’s collection of 78 rpm records and discovered the jazz of Louis Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke. He also purchased an old cornet at a pawn shop and taught himself to play. While attending Alamo Heights High School, Jim, Jr., played in a small jazz band. Occasionally, his father sat in on saxophone. After graduating high school, young Jim got married and joined his father in the grocery business.
Father and son, frustrated at having no musical outlet, gradually assembled a rhythm section and in 1962 performed for the first time as the Happy Jazz Band. The original lineup included Jim Cullum, Sr., on clarinet; Jim Cullum, Jr., on cornet; Benny Valfre on banjo; Bill Case on piano; Harvey Kindervater on drums; Paul Crawford on trombone; and Wilson Davis on sousaphone. They performed for the San Antonio Jazz Club and searched beer joints around the city for a venue to play and finally secured a Sunday afternoon patio engagement at Rex’s for about six months.

Slowly the band built a following. In 1963, at the behest of trombonist (and new band member) Jim Hayne, a group of San Antonio investors pooled their monies to open a nightclub on the Riverwalk. Located in the basement of the Nix Annex building, the club was called The Landing. It was one of the earliest establishments on the Riverwalk at that time. Only Casa Rio restaurant and a small gift shop were in business there. The Landing became the home for the Happy Jazz Band, which performed on weekends. They eventually released a recording, Jazz From the San Antonio River, on their Happy Jazz label.

The Cullums continued to operate their grocery business during the week until 1968 when the HemisFair celebration brought a wave of tourists to the city. The event spurred the construction of hotels and other businesses along the Riverwalk, and the Happy Jazz Band’s classic sound reached a broader audience. The Cullums sold their grocery business and concentrated on being full-time professional musicians performing five nights a week at The Landing.

During this time, they put together special events, such as the “World Championship of Jazz”—friendly competitions that pitted the band against such luminaries as Pete Fountain and his Band, the Benny Goodman Sextet, Don Albert’s New Orleans All-Stars, Joe Venuti, Earl Hines, and others. During at least one such bout, Louis Armstrong served as the “referee.” During the early years, the band lineup remained...
fairly stable, though a few changes in personnel occurred. Cliff Gillette replaced Case on piano and later Cliff Brewton replaced Gillette, for example.

In 1973 Jim Cullum, Sr., died of cancer, and his son Jim, Jr., carried on as leader and renamed the group The Jim Cullum Jazz Band. Bobby Gordon joined the group on clarinet, and in 1975 Allan Vaché became the band clarinetist. The band continued an impressive output of recordings of traditional jazz, including releases on Cullum’s new American Jazz label. They also toured the jazz festival circuit in addition to their regular schedule of five nights a week. Stops on their tours included the Sacramento Jubilee, Manassas Jazz Festival, St. Louis Ragtime Festival, and Central City Jazz Jamboree.

Over the years, the group experienced other key personnel changes. Banjoist Howard Elkins and pianist John Sheridan joined the band in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s The Landing nightclub moved to the river level of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, and The Jim Cullum Jazz Band performed six nights a week. They appeared on *Austin City Limits* in 1985 and performed at Carnegie Hall in 1987. That year Jim Cullum began an association with Texas Public Radio that developed into the internationally-acclaimed *Riverwalk Jazz* radio program. The program, which has been on the air for almost thirty years, combines live jazz performances by The Jim Cullum Jazz Band and their guests with storytelling and biographical elements to tell the story of early jazz from the early 1920s to pre-World War II.

During the 1990s through the early 2000s The Jim Cullum Jazz Band continued its regular performance schedule of five nights a week at The Landing and had earned the title as the “only classic jazz group in America which performs five nights a week on a regular basis.” In 2011 the lineup included leader Jim Cullum, Jr., on cornet, trombonist Kenny Rupp, longtime member Howard Elkins on banjo and guitar, Ron Hockett on clarinet, Jim Turner on piano, Benji Bohannon on drums, and newest member Bernie Attridge on bass. Their weekly radio show *Riverwalk Jazz* produced by PVPMedia, Inc., on Public Radio International, was heard on more than 150 public radio stations nationwide, as well as on XM Satellite’s Real Jazz Channel and the *Riverwalk Jazz* site online. The ensemble had recorded some forty-five albums of traditional jazz, and their list of impressive performances included concerts at the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap Farm, and a tour of Russia.
The Jim Cullum Jazz Band’s longtime association with The Landing ended in 2011. Cullum had sold the club to Christopher Erck but with an assignment of lease that stipulated that Cullum and his band could continue to perform at the venue. Disagreement over renovations and performance conditions provoked a law suit by Cullum who charged fraud and breach-of-contract. Eventually the suit was dropped, and Cullum moved on. Erck proceeded with major renovations and eventually reopened the club as The Worm Tequila & Mezcal Bar.

Former clarinetist Bobby Gordon died in 2013. In 2015 the band’s core lineup was Cullum, Mike Pittsley (trombone), John Sheridan (piano), and Phil Flanagan (string bass). The Jim Cullum Jazz Band played regularly in San Antonio at Tucker’s Kozy Korner, Bohannon’s Steakhouse, and The Cookhouse Restaurant. The group also did some touring. In 2018 their schedule included a weekly Tuesday evening performance at Bar 414 at the Gunter Hotel.
The Texas Top Hands, one of the state's oldest continuously-performing western swing bands, debuted in 1945 with Clarence J. "Sleepy" Short on fiddle, George Edwin "Knee-High" Holley on string bass, Walter Kleypas on piano and accordion, and William Wayne "Rusty" Locke on steel guitar. Manager Johnny H. "Curley" Williams played acoustic guitar. The Top Hands had an early-morning spot on WOAI radio, which was at that time a 50,000-watt clear-channel station in San Antonio.

The group had performed since 1941 under the name Texas Tumbleweeds. Then Bob Symons, the former manager of the Tumbleweeds, came home from a stint with the United States Marines in World War II. When he filed a lawsuit to reclaim his band name, the group changed its name over a weekend, appearing under the old name on Friday and showing up Monday morning as the Texas Top Hands, the name that they still retain.

They traveled to New York in 1946 to record for Savoy and to back singer–songwriter "Red River" Dave McEnery on his Continental recording sessions. With McEnery, the Top Hands made several film shorts in 1947. That year they also co-starred in a ground-breaking movie filmed near San Antonio. The film, Echo Ranch, departed from the usual Hollywood Westerns of the day in that it used no artificial scenery but was shot in natural outdoor settings. San Antonians made up the entire cast. Longtime Top Hands manager Ray Sczepanik owns a copy of the film.
In 1949 the Top Hands began recording on their own label, Everstate, on which they subsequently produced more than fifty recordings. The first—"Bandera Waltz" by O. B. "Easy" Adams—became a regional smash and remains a dance hall classic. The lament rode for fifty-two weeks at the top of the Hillbilly Hit Parade on KMAC. Slim Whitman, Ernest Tubb, Rex Allen, Jimmy Wakely, Adolph Hofner, David Houston, and nine other performers have recorded the song.

Tired of seven-night-a-week performing, with the Top Hands and with a band of his own, Kleypas left the band in 1952. Rusty Locke then managed the band until 1955, when he formed his own group. That left Easy Adams as leader until 1979, when he suffered a heart attack. Ray Sczepanik replaced him and still led the band in the 2010s. Locke later rejoined and played with the group for several years.

The Top Hands backed Hank Williams at one of his last Texas concerts, on December 16, 1952, at the Macdona Shooting Club, near San Antonio; Williams died a few days later. The Top Hands have opened for or backed other well-known singers such as Webb Pierce, Tex Ritter, Moe Bandy, Johnny Rodriguez, Jerry Lee Lewis, George Morgan, Jacky Ward, and Mel Tillis. During the early 1950s, while the band played over radio station KABC, Gene Autry, William Boyd (known as Hopalong Cassidy), Wild Bill Elliott, Chill Wills, and other movie stars appeared with the band.

The Top Hands became known throughout Texas for their many appearances at local festivals and rodeos. They were the only band to perform at the first Poteet Strawberry Festival in 1948. On April 1, 1997, Locke, age seventy-seven, returned to the festival, where he sang "Milk Cow Blues" and "Westphalia Waltz." Other appearances include the State Fair of Texas in Dallas (1955), where the show was broadcast live. Again, the Top Hands were the only band to perform. They also appeared at the Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show in Fort Worth, the Central Texas Fair in Temple, the Stompede and Rodeo in Bandera, Buccaneer Days in Corpus Christi, the Oil Show in Odessa, the Wool Show and Rodeo in San Angelo, the Stockman's Ball in Laredo, the Peanut Festival in Floresville, the Watermelon Jubilee in Stockdale, the Horse Show and Fair in Junction, the rodeo in El Paso, and the Pecos Rodeo (where they were a regular act from 1950 to 1976). In their heyday they performed twenty-five to thirty evenings a month. Among notable Texans in their audiences, they entertained Allan Shivers, Beauford Jester, Bill Clements, and John Connally. Their road trip in early 1949 promoted the first San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo, at which they also performed. The band returned for the show's thirty-
fifth anniversary under the direction of Ray Sczepanik. In 1955 the Top Hands were selected to represent the Lone Star Brewery.

The Texas Top Hands were inducted into the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame on May 9, 1992, in Austin. Former members of the band include Johnny Bush (drummer), Charlie Harris (guitarist), and Buck Buchanan (fiddler), all of whom later became members of Ray Price's Cherokee Cowboy Band. Other band members have included Charlie Shaw (drummer), Leon Merritt (vocalist and rhythm guitarist), Bill Schlotter and Pete Frazier (pedal steel guitarists), and Larry Nolen. The band had several releases on the Melco label in the mid-1960s and three for TNT in the early 1960s. In early 2003, Kleypas and Locke were the only two surviving members of the original band. Kleypas lived at Canyon Lake with his wife, Lucille, with whom he had celebrated more than sixty wedding anniversaries. Lucille is credited with naming the Top Hands. (A "top hand" is the best worker on a ranch.) Kleypas was also inducted as an individual musician into the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame in 2004. Locke lived with his wife, Cora, in Kirby, a suburb of San Antonio, where he owned and operated a television repair shop. Both Kleypas and Locke still made occasional guest appearances.

Walter Kleypas died in Kerrville on July 3, 2007, at the age of ninety-one. His musical cohort, Rusty Locke, the last surviving original band member, died on October 30, 2010, at the age of ninety.

In the 2010s the Texas Top Hands included leader Ray Sczepanik on guitar, bassist Ray Franklin, fiddler Ricky Turpin, Denny Mathis on steel guitar, Martin Stietle on drums, and Stan Zettner on piano and accordion. In 2013, in a move that caused local controversy, Sczepanik hauled away the Texas Top Hands 1948 bus from its longtime resting place outside of the Broken Spoke in Austin to Texas Pride Barbecue in Adkins, Texas, near San Antonio. Sczepanik, who owned the title, made plans to restore the vehicle.
The San Antonio Spurs, a professional basketball team in the Southwest Division of the National Basketball Association's Western Conference, began play as the Dallas Chaparrals, a charter team of the American Basketball Association, in 1967. The franchise played in Dallas for six seasons, moved to San Antonio before the 1973–74 season, then joined the NBA after the ABA folded in 1976. During their six seasons in Dallas, the Chaparrals enjoyed moderate success on the court, twice finishing second in the ABA Western Division, but repeatedly stumbled in the postseason playoffs. In five tries, the Chaps made it past the first round of the playoffs only once, in their first season, but lost in the second round. For the 1970–71 season the team changed its name to Texas Chaparrals in an attempt to gain a wider regional following, but abandoned the experiment after one season. Lack of fan support remained an insurmountable problem. In the team's final game at the Dallas Convention Center, the paid attendance was reported to be only 134.

At this low point in franchise history, a group of San Antonio businessmen, including Angelo Drossos, John Schaefer, Art Burdick, and B. J. "Red" McCombs, bought the team and moved it to San Antonio, renaming it the Spurs. Initially, at least, the changes did not seem to help much. The Spurs got off to a 1–6 start, and only 1,799 people showed up for the Spurs' first win at the HemisFair...
But during the season the Spurs made what later proved to be the most significant trade in team history, acquiring the virtually unknown George Gervin from the struggling Virginia Squires. The high-scoring Gervin, nicknamed "Iceman" for his unflappable demeanor, almost immediately established himself as one of the most popular players in the team's history. In the ABA's last three seasons the Spurs finished third, second, and third, but again lost in the first round of the playoffs each time. The ABA officially folded in June 1976, and four of its surviving teams—the Spurs, the Indiana Pacers, the New York Nets, and the Denver Nuggets—joined the NBA for the 1976–77 season.

The importance of Angelo Drossos both to the Spurs organization and the NBA in general cannot be overstated. Drossos (a “brilliant negotiator”) with McCombs brokered the deal to buy the team and set out to find additional investors. He hired the first general manager and was instrumental in choosing the team’s new name and in signing Gervin. Drossos was at the forefront in securing the Spurs as one of the ABA teams to join the NBA, and he also helped bring the three-point shot, a popular feature in the ABA, to the NBA. He was awarded the NBA Executive of the Year in 1978.

The Spurs almost immediately established themselves as one of the best teams in the NBA, winning five divisional titles in their first seven years in the league. Gervin, a virtually unstoppable offensive force, led the NBA in scoring four times in five seasons. But the Spurs' playoff jinx continued, as they lost in the first round four times and in the second round three times. In 1983–84, hampered by injuries and coaching changes, the team fell to fifth place in its division and missed the playoffs. That was the first in a string of six mediocre seasons that saw the Spurs finish higher than fifth only once, miss the playoffs three times, and lose three first-round playoff series.

But the 1986–87 season, when the Spurs finished with a dismal 28–54 record and missed the playoffs, proved to be a blessing in disguise. After it, the Spurs won a lottery to determine which team would pick first in the NBA's annual draft of college
In March 1993 McCombs sold his interest in the team to a consortium of up to twenty investors for $75 million, and following the 1992–93 season the team moved from the HemisFair Arena to the new Alamodome. During the 1994–95 season the team secured the best record (62–20) in its history. Robinson was named league MVP, and the team made it to the Western Conference Finals but lost to the Houston Rockets. The following season they reached the conference finals again but lost to the Utah Jazz. In 1996, as part of the league's fiftieth anniversary celebration, Gervin and Robinson were chosen among the top fifty NBA players of all time. That same year, local businessman Peter Holt bought into the consortium of investors and eventually became the chairman and public face of the ownership. The 1996–97 season, however, was a disaster for the Spurs, as Robinson missed all but nine games with a broken foot and the team plunged to a 20–62 record and last place in the division. In December 1996 Spurs general manager Gregg Popovich took over as head coach. Once again a silver lining appeared after the tough season. The team again won the draft lottery and chose the power forward Tim Duncan, a native of the U. S. Virgin Islands who played at Wake Forest University.

With Robinson and Duncan, dubbed the “Twin Towers,” playing together, the Spurs bounced back to post a 56–26 record in 1997–98, breaking their own record for the seasonal winning streak. 
biggest one-season turnaround in NBA history. Duncan was named Rookie of the Year, but the Spurs lost in the second round of the playoffs again. The NBA's 1998–99 season was shortened to only fifty games due to a labor dispute, but the Spurs rolled to a 37–13 record and tied for first in their division. With a starting lineup of Robinson, Duncan, Sean Elliott, Avery Johnson, and Mario Elie, the team finally broke through in the playoffs to win their first NBA championship in a 4–1 series over the New York Knicks. The Spurs were the first former ABA team to make the Finals and the first to win. Duncan was named Finals MVP. With Duncan replacing Robinson as the focal point of the team's offense, the Spurs remained at or near the top of their division in subsequent seasons, and Duncan was named to the All-NBA First Team in each of his first four years in the league.

In 2000 the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame bestowed its Pro Team Community Award to the Spurs for the charitable activities of the Spurs Foundation, which had given some $5 million to the children of South Texas. The Spurs earned more accolades after the 2000–01 season, when they compiled the league's best record at 58–24 and Gregg Popovich became the winningest coach in team history. The following season Robinson

The SBC Center in San Antonio.
became the team's all-time scoring leader, surpassing Gervin, and Duncan received his first league MVP award. The Spurs played their 2002–03 home opener at a new venue, the SBC Center (later renamed the AT&T Center). Compiling a stellar record of 60–22, Popovich was named the NBA's Coach of the Year, and Duncan earned his second league MVP award. The Spurs won the Western Conference Finals and went on to capture their second world championship by beating the New Jersey Nets 4–2 in the Finals, following which Robinson retired. Duncan was named MVP of the series.

The early 2000s saw the emergence of the “Big Three”—Tim Duncan, Manu Ginobili, and Tony Parker—as the driving force of the Spurs. Emanuel David “Manu” Ginobili of Argentina had previous years of experience playing for Argentina and in Europe and was selected by the Spurs as the 57th overall pick in the 1999 draft. William Anthony “Tony” Parker was a nineteen-year-old point guard from France and was drafted as the 28th pick in the 2001 draft. He was named to the NBA's All-Rookie Team for 2001–02 and was the first foreign-born guard to receive that honor. Both Ginobili and Parker played for the 2003 championship, and, with Duncan, established themselves as consistent high-level competitors and the recognizable trio of the team. Ginobili and Parker were also representative of the concerted effort of the Spurs coaching and scouting staff to search for talent abroad. By 2004 the roster included five international players.

Over the next decade the San Antonio Spurs exhibited consistent excellence under Coach Gregg Popovich. Their victories were most often achieved with defensive clamp-down clinics over opposing teams and led by Duncan’s solid defense as well as the lock-down play of small forward Bruce Bowen. Bowen, with the Big Three, helped the Spurs win their third championship in 2005 in a hard-fought seven-game series win against the Detroit Pistons. Duncan earned his third MVP series award.
The team was a game away from another Finals appearance in 2006 but lost in Game 7 of the Western Conference Finals to the Dallas Mavericks. In 2007 the Spurs made it back to the NBA Finals and faced the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Spurs swept the series with Bowen’s superior defense and overall team execution. Tony Parker won the MVP Award and became the first foreign-born player to achieve that honor. With four championships, the San Antonio Spurs became the winningest sports franchise in the new millennium, and the coaching staff was often mined by other teams looking to emulate the success of the Spurs.

The team continued to play at a high level led by the Big Three of Tim, Tony, and Manu, and the Spurs consistently achieved 50+ wins each season. Duncan (nicknamed “The Big Fundamental” and, in later years, “Old Man River Walk”) made twelve consecutive All-Star Game appearances. Parker had established himself as one of the best point guards in the league and as a superstar back home in France. Manu Ginobili reigned as a perennial favorite among Spurs fans with his dynamic acrobatic plays and wild passes and won the NBA’s Sixth Man of the Year Award in 2008. In spite of excellence on the court as well as a large international following, due to the team’s “unflashy” demeanor (epitomized by the stoic Duncan), national sports media often characterized the small-market team as boring. Consequently, the Spurs’ success often flew under the radar.
They made the Western Conference Finals once again in 2008 but fell to the Los Angeles Lakers. The following three seasons, the Spurs made the playoffs, including an astounding 2010–11 season of 61–21. The Spurs claimed the best record in the league, but they fell in the first round to eighth-seed Memphis.

Some of the national media, which had already been grumbling about the team’s perceived aging roster for several years, speculated on the retirement of Tim Duncan. Instead, Duncan remade himself during the offseason by losing weight and adopting a regimen focusing on nutrition and training. He emerged a rejuvenated player. During the 2011 draft, the San Antonio Spurs made a last-minute trade with the Indiana Pacers to acquire nineteen-year-old Kawhi Leonard, a small forward from San Diego State, the 15th overall pick. Popovich would eventually call him the future face of the Spurs.

After steamrolling through the early rounds of the playoffs for the 2011–12 season, the team hit the wall in the form of a young and rising team, the Oklahoma City Thunder, and lost the conference finals series 4–2.

With an astute awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of his players, Coach Pop, who had won his second Coach of the Year Award in 2012, and his staff evolved their game into faster-paced offensive play with an emphasis on ball movement and embracing a philosophy of passing up a good shot for a great shot. Analysts lauded the team for its unselfish character, while still adhering to the importance of team defense. The Spurs racked up an impressive record of 58–24 for the 2012–13 season.
season and fought their way to win the Western Conference and back to their first Finals appearance in six years. In a hotly-contested series against the Miami Heat, the Spurs, up 3–2 in the series, suffered heartbreaking losses in Games 6 and 7 to lose the series. Some national sports media pundits called for Ginobili’s retirement, while many others opined that the loss spelled the end of the Big Three era. Both Parker and Duncan had two years left on their contracts, while Ginobili signed a new two-year deal. During the offseason, management kept the team intact with only a couple of trades in the effort to upgrade the roster.

Driven by their close loss in 2013 and a desire to claim a fifth championship, the Spurs sliced through the regular season and clinched the best record in the NBA with 62–20. This was despite a rash of injuries during the winter that at one time saw four of the team’s six top players sitting on the bench and a staggering thirty different starting lineups. In the effort to keep his older players fresh for the postseason, Coach Pop relied on a deep bench to rest the Big Three. The result—the San Antonio Spurs became the first No. 1 seed in the league with a roster where no one averaged playing time over thirty minutes per game. Popovich won his third Coach of the Year Award, and longtime Spurs scout (since 1994) and general manager (since 2002) R. C. Buford won the NBA’s Executive of the Year. Manu Ginobili was nominated for (but did not win) another Sixth Man award. Heading the team for more than seventeen years, Pop was the longest-tenured coach in any of the major North American sports.

The 2014 playoffs saw a number of milestones. The Big Three achieved the most playoff wins of any trio in NBA history. Duncan secured the most double-doubles in NBA playoff history as

![The San Antonio Spurs lost in the 2013 NBA Finals. Courtesy of Mike Segar and Reuters.](image)

![General Manager R. C. Buford received NBA Executive of the Year in 2014. Courtesy of the San Antonio Express-News.](image)
well as the most playoff minutes. In their third straight conference finals appearance, the Spurs exorcised some playoff demons by beating the Oklahoma City Thunder 4–2 and subsequently made their first back-to-back Finals appearance in franchise history—a rematch with the Miami Heat. The Spurs were at the forefront of previous NBA commissioner David Stern’s concerted effort to expand basketball to international markets. The team claimed the largest number of international players on their roster, including Ginobili (Argentina), Parker (France), Boris Diaw (France), Tiago Splitter (Brazil), Marco Belinelli (Italy; first Italian-born player in the Finals), Patty Mills (Australia; first Indigenous Australian in the Finals), Aron Baynes (Australia), Cory Joseph (Canada), and Duncan (U. S. Virgin Islands).

The San Antonio Spurs clinched their fifth NBA championship with a definitive 4–1 in the series over Miami and achieved the highest field goal percentage (52.8) in the shot clock era as well as the largest points differential. Kawhi Leonard was named series MVP. At age twenty-two, he was the youngest player to earn that honor since Duncan had received it in 1999 and thus affirmed Pop’s earlier declaration of Leonard’s importance to the franchise. As was the case with the previous four titles, the Spurs and their fans celebrated the team’s fifth championship in uniquely San Antonian fashion—with a river parade. During the summer of 2014 the Spurs organization allowed individual players to take the Larry O'Brien Trophy on an unprecedented "Trophy Tour" (much like the Stanley Cup in the National Hockey League). The trophy embarked on a journey of more than 67,000 miles involving visits to seven countries on four continents.

The San Antonio Spurs organization is very active in the community with its nonprofit organization Silver & Black Give Back, which offers both youth sports and youth service programs. Additionally Spurs Sports & Entertainment owned the Austin Toros (which changed its name to the Austin Spurs in 2014), a NBA
Development League team purchased in 2007, and the San Antonio Rampage, a hockey team in the American Hockey League (AHL). Peter Holt also owned the San Antonio Stars of the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA), but Spurs Sports & Entertainment sold the Stars to MGM Resorts International after the 2017 season, and the team moved to Las Vegas.

The Spurs brought back all fourteen members of the 2014 championship team for the 2014–15 season. The organization also made historic additions to its coaching staff with the hiring of assistant coaches Ettore Messina and Becky Hammon. Italian-born Messina had won multiple championships coaching in Europe and was a two-time Euroleague Coach of the Year. Becky Hammon, a retiring WNBA All-Star with the San Antonio Stars, became the first female full-time assistant coach in NBA history (as well as in any of the four North American major professional sports.)

After the 2014–15 regular season, in the highly competitive Western Conference, the Spurs, seeded sixth in the playoffs, ultimately fell short and lost in a hard-fought seven-game series to the Los Angeles Clippers in the first round. The season produced several significant milestones. Coach Pop won his 1000th game in a 95–93 victory over the Indiana Pacers during the rodeo road trip. Tim Duncan, who turned thirty-nine in 2015, had an outstanding season. He became a fifteen-time All Star, was named a member of the NBA’s All Defensive Second Team and All NBA Third Team, and was honored with the 2014–15 Twyman-Stokes Teammate of the Year Award by a vote of almost 300 fellow NBA players. His remarkable longevity nudged him higher on a number of NBA record lists. Duncan and Parker became the winningest duo in NBA history. Kawhi Leonard earned NBA Defensive Player of the Year. Shooting guard Danny Green achieved the franchise record for most three-pointers in a season. With a regular season record of 55–27, the San Antonio Spurs extended their streak of 50 or more wins in a season to sixteen seasons.
With the offseason came a number of questions about the team's roster moving forward. The Spurs, in a rare chase for a high-profile free agent, signed All-Star forward LaMarcus Aldridge, a Texas native who had spent nine seasons with the Portland Trailblazers. They also signed veteran player David West, who opted out of more than $12 million to sign a minimum deal with the team. The Spurs secured contracts with both Leonard and Green, and Duncan and Ginobili (both free agents) signed two-year deals (with player options for year two), thus securing at least one more season of the Big Three.

Assistant Coach Becky Hammon was named head coach of the Spurs NBA Summer League team in Las Vegas in July 2015, thus making history as the first female to ever head a Summer League team. She continued her historic run and coached the team to a record of 6–1 and the Summer League championship. Second-year player Kyle Anderson was named tournament MVP, while newly-signed Jonathan Simmons earned MVP of the championship game.

Members of the Spurs organization also participated in the NBA's first-ever basketball game in Africa. NBA Africa Game 2015 took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, on August 1, 2015. Gregg Popovich was named head coach of Team Africa, which included Spurs player Boris Diaw (whose father was born in Senegal), and R. C. Buford was named Team World general manager.

On November 1, 2015, with their 541st regular season win (in a victory of 95–87 over the Boston Celtics), the Big Three of Duncan, Parker, and Ginobili became the winningest trio in NBA history.
The 2015–16 season increasingly saw a transition from the Big Three to what some local sportswriters referred to as the “New Two” of Leonard and Aldridge. Both made the All-Star game; it was Leonard’s first appearance. Parker, as starting point guard, became much more of a facilitator, and, while Duncan’s offensive numbers were down, he, with Leonard, anchored the team as the top defense in the NBA. Ginobili, meanwhile, still served as a field general for the second unit.

On March 9, 2016, Peter Holt retired as chairman and CEO of the Spurs, and his wife Julianna Hawn Holt assumed that role. Spurs Sports & Entertainment president of business operations Rick Pych was named co-CEO, as requested by Julianna Holt. Peter Holt remained on the Spurs board of managers.

The overall team effort produced a historic season as the San Antonio Spurs achieved a franchise record of 67–15, and they tied the best home record at 40–1 (matching a previous best by the Boston Celtics). Leonard’s ascent continued as he repeated his honor as Defensive Player of the Year and garnered enough votes to place second in League MVP voting. General Manager R. C. Buford was honored with Executive of the Year. Despite their remarkable season, which still flew under the radar to the Golden State Warriors’ record-breaking 73–9 season, the Spurs fell to Oklahoma City (4–2) in the second round of the playoffs. Following the season, Coach Pop commented on the organization’s intent to get younger and more athletic.

On July 11, 2016, Tim Duncan quietly announced his retirement through a Spurs press release. His amazing run of nineteen seasons included numerous records, five championships, fifteen All-Star appearances, fifteen All-NBA selections, fifteen All-Defense teams, three Finals MVPs, and two League MVPs. During the Popovich–Duncan era, the team posted a record of 1,071–438—the “highest winning percentage in professional sports over that span” (1997–98 through 2015–16 seasons). Following the retirement announcement, Pop commented that Duncan was “irreplaceable.” San Antonio Mayor Ivy Taylor declared July 21, 2016, to be “Tim Duncan Day.”
As the Spurs entered a new era, Ginobili returned for at least one more season and, with Parker, provided veteran leadership for the team. David West opted out of his contract and moved on. Ten-year Spurs veteran and fan favorite Matt Bonner, was a casualty of the team’s push to get younger. The Spurs organization signed All-Star center/forward and two-time champion Pau Gasol and also added a number of younger players, including 2016 draft pick Dejounte Murray and “draft and stash” Latvian player Davis Bertans. The team achieved a back-to-back 60-plus winning season with a record of 61–21 for 2016–17. Popovich was nominated for Coach of the Year, and once again, Leonard received nominations for both Defensive Player of the Year and League MVP. Major injuries to Parker and Leonard during the playoffs, however, derailed their potential championship run, and the Spurs were swept by the Golden State Warriors in the Western Conference Finals. The team largely stood pat with their core lineup during the offseason, which saw blockbuster trades and signings between other NBA teams. Forward Rudy Gay signed a two-year contract. Ginobili also signed on for another season.

The injury-marred season of 2017–18 presented tough challenges for the team, as Parker and Rudy Gay missed significant stretches, and Leonard missed all but nine games due to quadriceps tendinopathy. With twenty-four different starting lineups during the regular season, the team struggled offensively but still ranked near the top defensively. LaMarcus Aldridge had an All-Star season and led the team in scoring. Their 47–35 record earned only the seventh seed in the competitive Western Conference, and the Spurs fell to the Golden State Warriors 4–1 in the opening round of the playoffs. Nevertheless, the team kept their playoff streak alive at a staggering twenty-one consecutive appearances.
The first chapter of the National Pan American Golf Association was founded in San Antonio in 1938 but under a different name. In January 1938, five Tejanos who lived in San Antonio met in the upstairs office of physician Juan Rivero to found an association of local Hispanic amateur golfers. His office was located above the Socorro Drug Store in what is now known as the historic El Mercado area of San Antonio. The attendees at that first meeting decided to invite fifteen additional Hispanic golfers to become charter members. The group’s purpose was to provide golf competitions and a social network for its members.

Originally the organization was known as Fore Golfers. Brackenridge Park Golf Course was the organization’s home course. By the spring of 1938 the number of members had grown to more than a hundred. The meetings were moved to the Mexican Christian Institute, located at 1214 Colima Street (the site of the Inman Christian Center in 2018).

Although the Brackenridge Park Golf Course was a public, city-owned course, there were still some vestiges of racial discrimination in the late 1930s. Mexican Americans were not allowed to participate in city amateur sports events in that era. Also, the city of San Antonio would not rent the course to the Hispanic group unless the organization prepaid the rental fee. Cruz Lozano, the owner of a local meat-packing company, loaned the new association $900 in order to reserve tee times and prepay rental fees for the association’s tournaments at Brackenridge.

During World War II the association’s tournaments and other activities were suspended. Many members served in the military during the war. After the war, some golfers from Seguin joined the San Antonio organization.
In 1947 Claude Estrada, a member of Fore Golfers, suggested changing the name of the group to the Pan American Golf Association (PAGA). The proposed name was adopted.

The first satellite chapter of PAGA was established by the early 1950s, after member Raul Sandoval moved his business from San Antonio to Corpus Christi in June 1950. PAGA’s then-president Al Zepeda suggested that Sandoval organize a chapter in Corpus. Before long other chapters were organized in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston.

In 1953 PAGA member Tony Holguin won the Texas Open Tournament (known as the Valero Texas Open in 2018) and became the first PAGA member to win a PGA Tour event. In 1956 the PAGA chapters began a series of statewide tournaments, and two years later those events became official championship tournaments. In the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, the PAGA grew to become a national organization (NPAGA) with more than thirty chapters. The group also initiated a junior golf program.

In the 2010s the NPAGA has become the largest Hispanic golf organization in the United States, with more than forty-three chapters in nine states and more than 2,600 members. In addition to the many chapters in Texas cities, chapters in other locations include Pomona, California; Detroit, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois; Phoenix, Arizona; and Kansas City, Missouri. Over several decades, the organization has awarded thousands of scholarships. The San Antonio chapter, located at 2300 Avenue B, also houses the National PAGA archives.
Adolph “Ad” Toepperwein, noted exhibition marksman, was born in Boerne, Texas, on October 17, 1869. He was the son of German immigrants Emil Albrecht Ferdinand Toepperwein and Johanna (Bergmann) Toepperwein. Soon after, the family moved to Leon Springs in Bexar County, where Ferdinand Toepperwein was a well-known gunsmith. When Adolph was thirteen his father died, and the boy went to San Antonio and first worked in a crockery shop and then as a cartoonist for the San Antonio Express. After seeing the famed sharpshooter William Frank “Doc” Carter in an exhibition of marksmanship, Toepperwein began perfecting his own shooting talents. In 1889 he quit his newspaper job, and, in search of a vaudeville job, he went to New York with San Antonio theater manager George Walker. For two years Toepperwein performed his shooting feats at minstrel shows before accepting a job with Orrin Brothers Circus. He toured with the show for eight years and traveled across the United States and in Mexico.

By 1900 Adolph Toepperwein was apparently back in San Antonio and was listed on the census as a “drummer” (or salesman). In 1901 he began his fifty-year association with the Winchester Repeating Arms Company as an exhibition publicity agent and sales representative. While visiting New Haven, Connecticut, in 1902, he met Elizabeth Servaty (see TOEPPEPERWEIN, ELIZABETH S.), an employee at the Winchester plant. They married in 1903, and, even though she had never fired a gun in her life, she took an interest in her husband’s marksmanship and learned the art of shooting. Within two years the Toepperweins were traveling as a team, billed as "The Famous Topperweins" (their name Americanized). “Plinky,” as she was called, became an
outstanding woman sharpshooter, representing American Powder Mills. They traveled throughout the world. Their only child, Lawrence Clark, was born in 1904, and he stayed with his paternal grandmother and aunt during his parents’ tours. He later worked as a reporter and cartoonist for the San Antonio Express before his death in 1940.

Ad Toepperwein's first official record was made at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. In 1906, during a three-day exhibition, he made 19,999 hits out of 20,000 hand-thrown wood blocks. It was in San Antonio during a ten-day period from December 13 to December 22, 1907, where Toepperwein made his famous world record and performed what the San Antonio Daily Express described as “the greatest shooting exhibition ever given.” Using three 1903 model Winchester .22 automatics, he fired at a total of 72,500 wood blocks and missed only 9 during sixty-eight and one-half hours of target shooting. He used up all of the ammunition for sale in the city. He attracted both rural and town dwellers to exhibits wherever Winchester guns were sold. He showcased his shooting prowess with rifles, shotguns, and pistols at a variety of targets. His demonstrations also included the creation of his own artistic renderings through “shoot outs”—employing bullet holes to draw pictures of Indians, cowboys, ducks, and other subjects. During World War II the Toepperweins toured military installations. Their last tour together occurred in 1943. Plinky Toepperwein died in 1945.

Ad Toepperwein toured until his retirement in 1951. He remained an advisor for Winchester. He conducted a shooting camp and gave free lessons in Leon Springs, but he increasingly suffered
from failing hearing and eyesight. Ad Toepperwein died at Santa Rosa Medical Center in San Antonio on March 4, 1962, and was buried beside his wife in Mission Burial Park. His gravestone includes the quote, “Keep Your Powder Dry.” Since 1963 the San Antonio Gun Club has hosted the Toepperwein Memorial Skeet Shoot in the couple’s honor, and Adolph Toepperwein was inducted into the Texas Sports Hall of Fame in 1966. A Toepperwein museum was opened in May 1973 on the Lone Star Brewery grounds in San Antonio to house some of the memorabilia of the team's long years of marksmanship. In late 1998 the Toepperwein Gallery was moved with the Buckhorn Collection to the new site of the Buckhorn Saloon and Museum located downtown. Ad Toepperwein was inducted into the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame in 1999. A Texas Historical Marker was erected in his honor in Boerne in 2013.
William Carson “Nemo” Herrera, distinguished Mexican American educator and high school athletics coach, son of Rodolfo and Carolina Herrera, was born in Brownsville, Texas, on February 19, 1900. His father Rodolfo was a member of the Mexican landowning class that immigrated to Texas after losing their property during the unrest of the Mexican Revolution. His mother Carolina claimed to be a descendant of José Francisco Ruíz, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The family later relocated from Brownsville to San Antonio, Texas, about 1907. Their relatively privileged social status allowed Nemo, as he was best-known, to grow up as part of the Mexican American middle class that was fairly assimilated, and, as a result, he avoided many of the racial, economic, and political issues that plagued much of the Mexican American community.

Herrera attended public schools in San Antonio and began playing organized sports at age twelve as a shortstop on the Newsboys, a team sponsored by the San Antonio Express. At age thirteen, Herrera became the batboy for the San Antonio Bronchos [sic] of the Texas League. During his time as batboy, the team bestowed upon him his lifetime nickname, “Nemo,” after the protagonist of the popular comic strip Little Nemo in Slumberland. In part, it was also an Anglicization of his family nickname “Memo,” a diminutive version of Guillermo (the Spanish equivalent for William). While he attended Brackenridge High School in San Antonio, Herrera excelled as a second baseman on the baseball team and a forward on the basketball team. He also played football in the fall.
In 1918 Herrera was recruited by legendary Texas high school and college coach Peter Willis Cawthon to play at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Herrera lettered in basketball and baseball in all four years that he attended Southwestern, and he was the leading scorer and captain on the basketball team in his third year. Additionally, he was a two-time member of the All-State college basketball team and a one-time member of the All-State college baseball team. Herrera also lettered in football during his freshman year but decided to quit the sport after sustaining a serious leg injury. Outside of sports, he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and a private in the Student Army Training Corps. Although he did not graduate from Southwestern, likely due to financial difficulty, Herrera eventually earned a degree from the University of San Antonio (now part of Trinity University).

Beginning in 1919, Herrera played for a number of different semi-professional and minor league baseball teams in Texas, Louisiana, and Missouri, as a way to earn money for school while on summer break. During this time he played alongside future World Series champion coach Eddie Dyer and future Hall of Famer Ted Lyons and enjoyed brief stints as an infielder for the Galveston Sand Crabs of the Texas League and the St. Joseph Saints of the Western League. In 1923 Herrera obtained his first high school coaching experience at Beaumont High School, where he served as an assistant coach under former Georgetown, Texas, mayor and future Texas A&M coach Lilburn “Lil” Dimmitt. While at Beaumont, Herrera focused his attention on the basketball team and helped them to win a district title in 1924. He also played for a semi-professional basketball team sponsored by the Gulf Oil Company in Port Arthur.

A year later Herrera took a job with the Gulf Oil Company subsidiary in Tampico, Mexico, where he continued to play baseball for various semi-professional and company-sponsored teams from 1924 to 1927. While in Mexico, Herrera also coached a baseball team sponsored by Luz y Fuerza, a state-owned Mexican electric company. In July 1927 he was injured during a baseball game in Tampico and sent to the local American hospital for treatment. While there he met Mary Leona Hatch, a nurse from Tampico.
In August 1928 Herrera was hired to coach all sports at Sidney Lanier Junior High School in San Antonio’s poor, mostly Mexican and Mexican American West Side barrio. In his first year, he led each of the school’s three basketball teams to a district championship. The following year, when the school was transformed into a junior-senior high school, Herrera was denied the senior head coaching position. However, he was later promoted to head coach of all senior sports in 1933. This likely made him the first Mexican American head coach of a major high school sports program in Texas. Although there were years when he did not coach football at Lanier, he always coached basketball and baseball. Additionally, he supplemented his income by working as a college basketball referee and, in the summer, as an umpire in the American minor leagues and the Mexican National League.

During his tenure at Lanier, Herrera developed a reputation for his strict and paternalistic coaching style. He was known to use corporal punishment regularly and often spent his weekends tracking down truant students. On the basketball court, he compensated for Lanier’s perennial lack of size by speeding up the tempo of the
game; he emphasized aggressive defensive play and instituted an early form of the largely unknown full-court press. The strategy worked—between 1938 and 1945 Lanier won five district titles and reached the final four of the Class A state basketball playoff four times, winning the state title in 1943 and 1945. This consistent success attracted the attention of Texas A&M University, whose head basketball coach Marty Karow took a leave of absence to serve in the military during World War II. Herrera was offered a job as Karow’s wartime replacement in 1944, but he declined, citing the temporary nature of the position.

In August 1945 Herrera left San Antonio to become the head coach at El Paso Bowie High School. Similar to Lanier High School, Bowie was located in a highly segregated, under-served, and predominantly Mexican American neighborhood known as El Segundo Barrio. As coach of the varsity basketball team, Herrera led Bowie to four district titles and one appearance in the final four of the state basketball playoff in 1948. Additionally, he organized Bowie’s first baseball team in 1946 and led them to two consecutive city titles in their first two seasons. In 1949 Bowie’s team qualified for the first-ever state high school baseball championship tournament, where they were the only all-Hispanic team to compete. Unable to find accommodations in Austin, the team slept on army cots under the bleachers of Texas Memorial Stadium for the duration of the tournament. Despite this, they went on to win the Class AA state title, and seven Bowie players were named to the All-State team. With that victory, Herrera joined William Jewell Wallace and George “Red” Forehand as the only Texas high school coaches to win a state championship in more than one sport.

Herrera remained at Bowie High School until 1960 and won three more district baseball titles in 1950, 1958, and 1959. He retired from coaching varsity basketball in 1955 but continued to coach both baseball and football. From 1960 to 1962 Herrera took a job as varsity baseball coach at Edgewood High School in San Antonio. Afterwards, he returned to El Paso to coach at the newly-built Coronado High School. Once again, he organized the school’s first-ever baseball program and led the team to a Class AAAAA district title in 1967. Outside of high school athletics, Herrera organized several commercially-sponsored summer baseball leagues in El Segundo Barrio and served as director of a county-wide youth baseball league funded by Project BRAVO in El Paso. He also coached El Paso’s under-fifteen baseball team to the 1958 Babe Ruth League World Series in Toronto.

Herrera left public education upon reaching the mandatory retirement age in 1970. He returned to San Antonio and began a new career at the age of seventy as the
Over the course of his forty-three-year coaching career, William Carson “Nemo” Herrera was the recipient of numerous awards and honors. Perhaps most impressively, he was the first Hispanic inducted into the Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor in 1967. Herrera was also inducted into the Southwestern University Athletic Hall of Fame (1995), the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame (1969), the El Paso Baseball Hall of Fame (1988), the Texas High School Basketball Hall of Fame (1999), the San Antonio ISD Athletics Hall of Fame (2016), and the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame (1997). Additionally, the gymnasium at Lanier High School, the baseball stadium at Bowie High School, the youth center at Kelly Air Force Base, and an elementary school in El Paso—as well as scholarship funds in both San Antonio and El Paso-- were named in Herrera’s honor.
Alva Jo “Tex” Fischer, pitcher and infielder, one of three Texas women to play in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL), and a member of the 1945 Rockford Peaches AAGPBL Championship team, was born in San Antonio, Texas. According to her birth and death certificates, she was born on September 23, 1926. She was the daughter of Arnold Earl Fischer, Sr. and Lida Mae (Henry) Fischer.

Fischer attended St. Paul’s Elementary School and Page Junior High in San Antonio. At the age of nine, she began playing softball and quickly became a city league pitching prodigy noted for throwing shutouts and no-hitters. Prior to an exhibition game against Grand Rapids Furniture in June 1940, the San Antonio Light advertised that Fischer would play all nine positions—starting the game as the pitcher and rotating to a different position of the field each inning. She continued to play city league softball while attending Brackenridge High School. Alva Jo Fischer and city league teammate Ruth Lessing attracted attention from the National Softball League and the newly-formed All-American Girls Professional Baseball League in 1944. Lessing signed with the AAGPBL in 1944, and Fischer joined in 1945.

At the age of seventeen, Fischer joined the AAGPBL during the 1945 season and was assigned to the Rockford Peaches, where her teammates began to call her “Tex.” Primarily a pitcher, she won four games and pitched ninety-eight innings as part of the Peaches team that won the league championship. During the 1946 season she was assigned to the Muskegon Lassies, where she remained for the rest of her AAGPBL career. Although manager Buzz Boyle experimented with her as a shortstop, she was
primarily a pitcher that season and pitched 224 innings with a 2.77 earned run average (ERA). She also had a .309 batting average in 97 at bats. For spring training in 1947 Fischer traveled with the league to Havana, Cuba, where teams recruited talent and played against Cuban softball teams. In 1947 Muskegon Lassies’ new manager Bill Wambsganss moved Fischer off the mound and to shortstop for the season to utilize her strong arm. Although she struggled in the field, she drove in 35 runs and stole 28 bases that season with a .202 batting average.

Fischer played shortstop and pitched during the 1948 and 1949 seasons for Muskegon. During the 1948 season, she had a .252 batting average and set career highs in hits (89) for the season and runs (31) as a hitter, while her defense improved in the field. As a pitcher for the Lassies, during a season that saw the league transition from full sidearm pitching to overhand pitching style, Fischer compiled a 1.47 ERA and struck out 55 in 129 innings pitched, while winning nine games. Her highlight year as a defensive player and pitcher was 1949. On the pitching mound, she struck out a career high 86 batters, won ten games, and posted a 1.78 ERA in 157 innings pitched. Although she struggled as a hitter in 1949, she still drove in 47 runs, stole 22 bases, and played stellar defense at shortstop that positioned her as one of the league’s top middle infielders. She ended the season as a second team All-Star Selection as a pitcher. After the 1949 season, Fischer returned to San Antonio to be closer to her family after the death of her father in 1946. During her time in the AAGPBL, the exploits of her and fellow San Antonio native Ruth Lessing were chronicled by the San Antonio newspapers. Teammates remembered Fischer as a strong player with a jovial personality. Teammate Doris Sams recalled an instance when Fischer mimicked a radio broadcaster in the clubhouse; she was unaware that the microphone was live and heard by the people in the stands.

After returning home to San Antonio, Fischer worked for San Antonio’s Parks and Recreation Department as a director for the Denver Heights Center, as well as acting as the co-coordinator of special events for the Economic Opportunities Development
Corporation in the 1960s. After obtaining an education degree at Our Lady of the Lake University, she was employed by the San Antonio Independent School District as a physical education instructor and taught seventeen years—fourteen with Highlands High School and three with Connell Junior High School. Fischer continued playing sports through city league fast pitch softball and represented teams like Thompson Motors, Pepsi-Cola, Dr Pepper Girls, Budweiser Bubbles, Lamp Post Inn, and Unique Painting. Fischer was one of the stars of the San Antonio city leagues and played into her mid-forties—being a part of the city and state championship teams in fast pitch softball, continuing to pitch shutouts and no-hitters, and gaining acclaim for her defense at shortstop and third base. In 1961 the Pepsi-Cola team Fischer played for that had won the Texas state championship faced off against a championship softball team from Mexico City in a six-game exhibition series at Mission Stadium. Fischer pitched a two-hit shutout in the opening game.

Fischer continued to play city league softball until 1970, when she was diagnosed with leukemia. She died of leukemia at the age of forty-six in San Antonio, Texas, on August 15, 1973. She was survived by her mother and siblings. She was considered one of San Antonio’s greatest women athletes, and a softball facility, the Alva Jo Fischer Softball Complex, was named in her honor by the city of San Antonio in 1975. U.S. Representative Henry B. Gonzalez of San Antonio acted as the principal speaker for the field’s dedication. Fischer and other alumni of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League became part of the Women in Baseball permanent exhibit in the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York, in 1988. Fischer was also posthumously honored as a member of the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame in 1998 and the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006 for her contributions to baseball, the city of San Antonio, and the state of Texas. She shared the 2006 Texas Baseball Hall of Fame honor with fellow Texas AAGPBL players Ruth Lessing and Marie Mahoney.
Texas sportscaster and journalist Daniel “Dan” John Cook, Jr, was born on August 12, 1926, in Houston, Texas. He was the son of Daniel John Cook, Sr., and Mary (Marmion) Cook. In Houston, he attended St. Thomas High School, where he excelled in sports, and went on to study at the University of Houston for two years. In 1944, when he was seventeen years old, Cook went to work at the Houston Post and earned $25 a week. He stayed there for five years, followed by three years in Beaumont, where he wrote for the Enterprise. In 1950 he met Katherine “Katy” Elliott in Beaumont, and they married on November 24, 1952. They immediately moved to San Antonio, where Cook had accepted a job as a copy editor and writer for the San Antonio Express-News earlier that year.

Dan Cook, in retrospective, commented that he had initially planned to use San Antonio as a stepping stone for his sports journalism career and move on to a bigger market, but soon he grew fond of the Alamo City and thus began his fifty-one-year career writing for the San Antonio Express-News. In 1956 Cook also went to work as a sportscaster for KENS-TV. He became the station’s first primetime sportscaster in 1957 and served as sports anchor until 2000.

Cook was known for his fearless, no-nonsense style and quickly became, as Express-News sportswriter John Whisler later characterized, “a San Antonio institution” who garnered respect from his peers and readers beyond South Texas to national circles. His debut sports column in the Express-News on November 29, 1956, began a run of more than 10,000 columns that spanned almost six decades. From 1960 to 1975 he served as executive sports editor. At one point Cook turned down a chance to be a syndicated columnist in Chicago in order to stay in his adopted home of San Antonio. He
maintained a staggering output and schedule. During the 1970s, for example, while he served as *Express-News* sports editor, he wrote six columns a week, recorded two daily radio commentaries, anchored television sportscasts at 5 p.m. and 10 p.m., served as president of the Texas Sportswriters Association, and also owned a bar called Dan Cook’s Time Out. He had a penchant for poker, practical jokes, and tall stories. His alter ego that he dubbed “Benjamin P. Broadhind” in his columns became a favorite character for readers. But Cook was highly-respected by the national sports media and counted other high-profile writers such as Blackie Sherrod of the *Dallas Morning News* and Edwin Pope of the Miami Herald as friends.

During his fifty-seven years in sports news, Cook interviewed many sports legends, including Joe Louis, Jack Dempsey, Mickey Mantle, Babe Ruth, Ted Williams, Muhammad Ali, and Tom Landry. He also often made reference to a memorable interview with pro wrestler Fritz von Erich who demonstrated his “Iron Claw” on the sportscaster. Cook attended some twenty-six Super Bowls, numerous basketball finals, baseball series, major boxing matches, and other national sporting events during his career.

Cook has also been credited for coining the phrase “The opera ain’t over till the fat lady sings.” The phrase came about and was popularized during a 1978 KENS-TV sportscast in reference to the San Antonio Spurs versus Washington Bullets battle in the NBA Eastern Conference Semifinals. Cook was making the point that, while the Spurs had won the game, the series had not yet ended. The saying was later picked up by the Washington coach as well as the Washington Post. Cook stated that he had actually used the phrase in a column two years earlier. Some sources have attributed the origin of the quote to a column in the Dallas Morning News in 1976. Cook’s popularization is credited in sources such as *Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* and *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations*.

Cook won the *Express-News*’s Hearst Eagle Award in 1995. In 1996 he was enshrined in the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame. Among his civic activities, in 1996 Cook
initiated a campaign to save and restore a community center in downtown San Antonio. He also began an annual golf tournament as a fundraiser. Upon completion of the project in 2004, the facility was renamed the Dan Cook Youth Center. At the end of Cook’s final sportscast on KENS-TV on November 29, 2000, a “Fat Lady” came out on the news set and sang to him. In 2001 his book *The Best of Dan Cook: Collected Columns from 1956 to 1990* was published. Cook retired from the *Express-News* in 2003. His last column appeared on August 3, 2003. That year the Dan Cook Scholarship for Sports Writing was established. The *Express-News* also initiated the Dan Cook Cup—an all-sports award for San Antonio area high schools.

Dan Cook passed away in San Antonio on July 3, 2008. He was eighty-one years old and was survived by his wife Katy, daughters Marie and Alice, and son Danny. He was buried in Sunset Memorial Park in San Antonio. His colleague and *Express-News* columnist David Flores called Cook “one of the last great sportswriters of his generation.”
San Pedro Springs Park (also known as San Pedro Park), the oldest park in Texas and one of the oldest municipal parks in the United States, is located in San Antonio between North Flores Street and San Pedro Avenue and faces the San Antonio College campus. Today the park comprises forty-six acres of land and has a swimming pool, tennis center, and the San Pedro Playhouse, which hosts live theater and houses the organization known as The Public Theater of San Antonio.

The San Pedro Springs were vital to early settlement, and in 1729, when King Philip V of Spain gave a royal grant of six leagues of land to San Antonio de los Llanos, the springs and surrounding area were declared public land for the benefit of all settlers. After the arrival of the Canary Islanders, an acequia was dug from the springs’...
main lake to their new settlement. The area remained a popular camping and recreation spot into the nineteenth century.

In 1851 the San Antonio city council took action to establish clearly-defined boundaries for the park which eventually led to the city’s clear title to forty-six acres. On November 6, 1852, the city dedicated the park as a new public square, and in 1854 Frederick Law Olmsted visited San Pedro Springs as one of “several pleasant points for excursions” and later described the park as a “wooded spot of great beauty, but a mile or two from the town, and boasts a restaurant and beer-garden beyond its natural attractions.” The park was the site of several military encampments during the Mexican War, and the U.S. Army temporarily stabled camels there in 1856. In 1861 the area around the springs was used as a Confederate prison camp, but in 1863 the city council prohibited the park’s use for military encampments or livestock storage due to the damage caused on the premises.

John Jacob Duerler, a Swiss landscape designer, was an early resident and caretaker of the park and in 1852 had purchased land adjoining San Pedro Springs from the city and rented the land surrounding the springs. In 1854 Duerler built a house on the parkland and petitioned the city council to allow him to remain. The council agreed on the condition that Duerler assume responsibility for protecting the parkland. In 1864 Duerler petitioned the city council to extend his lease on the parkland for twenty years. According to the terms of the agreement, Duerler was to improve the park through landscaping and development of recreational facilities. Over the next ten years he planted numerous trees and shrubs. He also made ponds for boating, fishing, and swimming. He built bathhouses, a tropical garden, picnic and concession areas, a small zoo, an aviary, a racetrack, and a pavilion for concerts and dances. In 1866 Duerler had obtained a charter to build a street rail line from downtown San Antonio to the park, but the line was never built. Augustus Belknap bought the stock of the dormant San Antonio Street Railway, and in 1878 a mule-drawn car that carried passengers from Alamo Plaza to San Pedro Springs began regular service.
After Duerler’s death in 1874, his son Gustave and son-in-law Isaac Lerich retained the lease on the park. The lease and all improvements was sold to Frederick Kerble in 1882. The city council approved the sale and extended Kerble's lease. The park remained popular, with concessions, paddle boats, concerts, sporting contests, and even hot-air balloons. In 1885 Hungarian naturalist Gustave Jermy opened a museum of natural history on the grounds.

In the 1890s, however, with the digging of other wells, there was less dependence on the San Pedro Springs, and the springs suffered contamination from runoff, sewage, and horses. The park went into a period of decline. After Kerble's lease expired in 1891, the city of San Antonio assumed control of San Pedro Park. In 1891 the city installed electric lights, and in 1892 the racetrack was replaced with a baseball park. The city launched a cleanup and renovation of the park. The lake was cleaned, fixtures were painted, crews constructed a new boat landing and new bandstand, and greenery was planted. The park reopened in August 1899.

The city's first municipally-owned zoo was operated in the park from 1910 to 1915, when it was moved to Brackenridge Park. A municipal swimming pool, fed by the springs, was built in San Pedro Springs Park in 1922, followed by a community playhouse and a branch library in 1929. In 1940 the pool was closed, due to the declining flow of the springs. McFarlin Tennis Center was built in 1954. That same year the swimming pool was rebuilt, with the aid of funding from Howard E. Butt, but it was supplied with city water. In 1966 the old ballpark was converted into a softball center with two playing fields, scoreboards, bleachers, concession stands, and restrooms. Throughout much of the later twentieth century, the San Pedro Springs were mostly dry except during heavy rains. The tennis center was expanded in the 1970s, and the park included asphalt roadways and a parking lot.
In 1979 San Pedro Springs Park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During the 1970s and 1980s city leaders and park advocates called for the development of a master plan to rehabilitate the park. A key focus of any master plan was the restoration of the San Pedro Springs lake and the reintroduction of larger green spaces. Voters passed a $54 million bonds initiative for parks in 1994 which included funding a master plan for San Pedro Springs Park. Work from 1997 to 1999 included the removal of the existing swimming pool in order to develop a new lake (made to resemble the historic lake) and swimming pool. Some asphalt paving was taken out and replaced with green space, and educational signage regarding the park’s historical and cultural significance was erected. The restored park opened on May 20, 2000. Since its opening, water conservation efforts and pumping limits on the Edwards Aquifer have resulted in stronger spring flow and for longer periods of time. A nonprofit group, the Friends of San Pedro Springs Park, works to support efforts to preserve the park through funding ongoing renovation measures and educational campaigns.
The San Antonio Conservation Society was organized on March 22, 1924, under the leadership of Emily Edwards and Rena Maverick Green. San Antonio was the largest city in Texas at that time, and its rapid growth was threatening many of the historic aspects of the city. The ladies were particularly concerned with a street-widening project that threatened the distinctive old Market House, built in 1859 and one of the city’s few examples of Greek Revival architecture. The thirteen women present at the organizational meeting vowed not only to seek preservation of the Market House but also “to co-operate in the preservation of the Missions, to conserve Old Buildings, Documents, Pictures, Names, Natural Beauty and anything admirably distinctive of San Antonio”—in a phrase, “cultural conservation.” Although Market Street was widened and the Market House was taken down, the city promised to preserve its façade for use in construction of the 700-seat San Pedro Playhouse, to be the home of the San Antonio Little Theater in San Pedro Park. The stonework was found, however, to have been so roughly dismantled that it could not be reused. When the Playhouse opened in 1930, the city sought to placate society members by having the façade, in new stone, replicate that of the old Market House.

By then the Conservation Society had been maintaining an active interest in helping establish the Witte Museum, backing restoration of the Spanish Governor's Palace, supporting state purchase of land behind the Alamo, encouraging preservation of trees along the San Antonio River, maintaining original street names, and lobbying the city to establish a municipal planning department. But its greatest energies were
In 1941 the society purchased property that contained the 200-year-old aqueduct that carried water to San Francisco de la Espada Mission, designated a national historic landmark in 1966. This site was also transferred to the National Park Service for inclusion in the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park which began operations in 1983. In 1942 the 1850 Jeremiah Dashiell House, an old stone house overlooking the river bend, was purchased and became the society's headquarters; in 1950 the nearby 1855 Otto Bombach House was acquired. In 1957 twenty-five acres of pecan bottomland near the acequia of San Juan Capistrano Mission was acquired, and Acequia Park was established, deeded to the city of San Antonio in 1975, and transferred to the National Park Service in 1983. Scheduled for demolition in 1960, a group of three stone buildings that had been the home of José Antonio Navarro was acquired and restored. In 1975 this property was deeded to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, which maintained it as the José Antonio Navarro State Historical Park until 2008 when it was transferred to the Texas Historical Commission and was
known as the Casa Navarro State Historic Site. In 1961 the society was given the Yturri-Edmonds home and the Travieso Mill on Old Mission Road. The Oge Carriage House from King William Street and the 1855 Postert House, a small caliche block and stone rubble structure, were moved onto this property. This historic site currently serves as a house museum operated by the society. In 1965 sections of the Ursuline Convent (see Ursuline Academy, San Antonio), designed by early architects Jules Poinsard and François P. Giraud, were purchased, and in 1969 this property was entered in the National Register of Historic Places. In 1975 the society sold this property to the Southwest Craft Center, which operates a creative arts and crafts school at the site. Three outstanding houses, the 1876 Steves Homestead, the 1876 Ike West Home (both on King William Street in the King William Historic District), and the Charles Zilker House on Elm Street, were acquired. Other sites and structures acquired by the society between 1952 and 1988 for purposes of preservation include the O. Henry House, the 1870 Anton Wulff House, the 1870 Louis Gresser House, the 1893 Staacke Building, the 1891 Stevens Building, the 1913 Rand Building, the 1878 Hertzberg Clock, the 1867 August Stuemke Barn, and the 1926 Aztec Theatre. In every case the society assumed ownership of historic properties only to protect, preserve, or restore them, and then found an appropriate use for each. Some have been sold or given to other organizations and individuals, while a few are still owned by the society. The Steves Homestead, for example, has been maintained by the society as a historic house museum since 1954, while the Anton Wulff House has served as society headquarters since 1975. In addition, the society accepts façade easements as a means of ensuring the preservation of historic structures. The society currently holds five façade easements for the 1891 Reuter Building, the 1879 Old Bexar County Jail, the 1926 Emily Morgan Hotel, the 1906 Fairmount Hotel, and the 1925 Builders Exchange Building. The society achieved national recognition for its long-standing annual Christmas presentations of two Mexican folk dramas, Los Pastores ("The Shepherds") and Las Posadas ("The Inns"). Also popular since its inception in 1947 is Night in Old San Antonio: 300 Years of History

Antonio, held each spring at the time of **Fiesta San Antonio** in **La Villita**. Ecology was also an interest of the group. San Pedro Park was preserved as a recreational area through the society's efforts in the late 1940s; an annual tree-selling project was sponsored beginning in 1952, and trees were planted as well as sold by the organization. Travis Park, which had been deeded to the city in the 1850s, was leased by the city in 1954 to a corporation for an underground parking garage. The Conservation Society brought suit, and in a state Supreme Court decision in 1957 the lease arrangement was declared null and void, thus proving the society's contention that dedicated parkland had legal rights; Travis Park was therefore preserved as a city parkland.

In 1947 the Conservation Society added an associate membership, from which new active members were taken, and in 1955 a junior associate membership was created to enable young members to study regional history and traditions. Beginning in 1949 the society annually presented awards to people and organizations that best served the cause of conservation. The society's charter was amended in 1962 to include members' concern for the state's natural beauty and to emphasize the educational character of the society. An adjunct to the organization, the San Antonio Conservation Society Foundation, was chartered by the state on May 19, 1970. In 1975 the Conservation Society relocated its headquarters to the restored Anton Wulff House at 107 King William Street, and in 1982 the August Stuemke Barn was moved to the site. The society has had more than forty-five presidents since its organization; Emily Edwards served as the first president from 1924 to 1926, and Susan Beavin served as president in 2018.
The San Antonio River Walk (or Paseo del Rio) is a linear park that winds for thirteen miles from Brackenridge Park through downtown San Antonio and south to the farthest of the city’s five eighteenth-century Spanish missions. The central section of approximately 3½ miles is navigable by tourist barges that stop along riverside walkways near hotels, restaurants, and shops concentrated around the Great Bend or Horseshoe Bend. Navigation northward beyond the original River Walk was made possible in 2009 by construction of the only river lock in the state of Texas. Access to the remainder of the River Walk is along hiking and biking trails. The River Walk draws several million tourists a year, is ranked as one of the top travel destinations in Texas, and has inspired riverside developments throughout the world.

The River Walk has its origins at the end of the nineteenth century, when the narrow San Antonio River was replaced as the source of the city’s water by a municipal system fed by artesian wells. The wells began lowering the water table and periodically caused the river, some twenty feet below downtown street level, to go dry. Proposals for new use of the river’s tree-lined course as a park gained momentum in 1904, when irate citizens went before city commissioners to protest overzealous clearing of overgrowth along the river. New civic use followed. The annual spring festival’s king had traditionally made his ceremonious entry at a railroad station, but in April 1905 the king arrived by boat as part of the first river parade. A second such parade was held two years later as part of a riverside Carnival of Venice. It had to be delayed when a temporary dam to raise the water to a level adequate for boats washed out in a storm, and no more river parades were held for nearly three decades. In 1911 a group of businessmen commissioned an engineering study that reported the dwindling flow could safely be carried through a proposed underground conduit beneath downtown. That would permit the surface riverbed to be filled in for development. Opposing businessmen formed the San Antonio River Improvement Association. After added opposition from the City Federation of Women’s Clubs, city commissioners took no action on the proposal. Election in 1912 of a reform mayor, Augustus H. Jones, led to a mile-long landscaping of downtown riverbanks as a River Park, one of several municipal improvements inspired by the national “City Beautiful” movement. It was dedicated in November 1914. Architectural Record praised the park by observing, in 1919, that “the average city council would have built an intercepting sewer, the stream would have disappeared from view and the city would have become as commonplace as any other good hustling, enterprising town.” In about 1920 The Coffee House, in a riverside basement below the Houston Street bridge, became the first business to open along what became the River Walk.

Even before its completion, the River Park was submerged by two floods that spilled into the streets above, in October and December 1913. Continued flooding led the city
in 1920 to hire the Boston engineering firm Metcalf & Eddy to come up with a permanent solution. Its recommendations were adopted by San Antonio city commissioners that December. One recommendation called for building a dam two miles upstream to hold back flood runoff from the Olmos Creek watershed, the most serious cause of flooding downstream. Straightening six convoluted bends to speed passage of floodwaters was also approved. Not to be straightened was a seventh bend—the largest, a horseshoe-shaped meander in the heart of downtown. Instead, that bend and the rest of the riverbed were to be deepened and lined with steep masonry walls. The banks would be cleared of all trees and shrubs, which could impede floodwaters. The impact of that move did not register on citizens for another three months, when the Fiesta de San Jacinto Association made its customary application for a city permit to decorate trees beside the river for the next spring fiesta. This time, since there would soon be no trees, the permit was denied. A wave of protest arose from “men and women in all walks of life.” Officials about to face outraged citizens who had gathered at the Woman’s Club hastily decided the trees would remain.

A few months later came the greatest disaster San Antonio has faced in modern times. A twenty-three-hour downpour struck at 6:00 P.M. on September 9, 1921. A thousand acres of the city were flooded. A three-quarter square-mile area of downtown was covered by two to twelve feet of water. Despite at least 500 rescues, many by soldiers mobilized from nearby United States Army posts, more than fifty persons drowned, many of them in poor neighborhoods along San Pedro and Alazan creeks and their tributaries. It took nearly three more years for flood prevention plans to be finalized and for $2.8 million in municipal bonds to be approved so work could start. The city hired Samuel F. Crecelius, retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to supervise the overall project. Olmos Dam was finished in 1926. Downtown, floodwaters would be diverted into a straight path to avoid the politically sensitive Great Bend, also.
known as the Horseshoe Bend. Floodgates at both ends of the Great Bend would seal it from floodwaters. The bypass channel was completed in 1930. Protection of the Great Bend from high waters gave it unique potential for safe development close to the river level. The young San Antonio-born architect Robert H. H. Hugman, whose time in New Orleans had given him respect for that city’s awareness of its French heritage, believed the San Antonio River’s Great Bend could draw inspiration from San Antonio’s Spanish heritage. Hugman came up with an imaginary cross between Spain and Venice, a fanciful environment he conceived of as The Shops of Aragon and Romula. His Shops of Aragon would line a cobblestone lane descending from Houston Street to the river at the western end of the Great Bend. A bridge would cross into the bend. There, Romula, also accessed by stairways from the streets, would be lined with zones of shops, restaurants, and park-like areas. Narrow pedestrian bridges would arch the stream. Hugman envisioned gondolas poled “down the river on a balmy night, fanned by a gentle breeze carrying the delightful aroma of honeysuckle and sweet olive, [with] old-fashioned street lamps casting fantastic shadows on the surface of the water, strains of music in the air.”

In 1929 Robert Hugman took his plan to the San Antonio Conservation Society, an organization that was founded in 1924 in an unsuccessful effort to save the city’s unique market house and then concentrated on saving the Spanish San José Mission south of town. The society’s president sent him to San Antonio Mayor C. M. Chambers. The mayor quickly endorsed Hugman’s proposal as part of his overall cut-rate plan to counter the more costly city master plan proposed by Harland Bartholomew of St. Louis, one of the nation’s leading city planners. Bartholomew favored keeping the River Park as a natural area, with none of Hugman’s disruptions. Hugman failed to gain support from the San Antonio Conservation Society, a strong backer of Bartholomew. Society support was pivotal in the approval in 1933 of Bartholomew’s master plan, the city’s first. Robert Hugman, left to advocate his ideas on his own, finally found a supporter in hotelier Jack White. White had noted the
success of the 1936 Texas Centennial River Parade, sponsored by the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and saw potential for developing new business at his swank Plaza Hotel at the southern end of the Great Bend. He spearheaded organization of a local taxing district to help finance Hugman’s project. He gained both city assistance and additional federal funding from the Works Progress Administration with the aid of Congressman (and later mayor) Maury Maverick. Ground was broken in 1939. The channel walls of the old River Park had been of concrete and were equidistant between the river’s banks. Hugman replaced them with walls of limestone blocks that curved slightly irregularly to replicate the channel of a natural stream. Nearly 12,000 trees and shrubs were readied for planting, some of them temporarily removed from the riverside during construction. But leaders of the Conservation Society and others still loyal to the River Park were dismayed at the lavish amount of fanciful stonework Hugman insisted upon adding to the once sedate park for sidewalks, retaining walls, and bridges. They were instrumental in getting Hugman fired halfway through the project, though the key elements of his plan were already in place. Hugman was replaced by J. Fred Buenz, a landscape architect who tempered the use of additional stonework.

The newly-completed River Walk was dedicated in April 1941 with the first of the annual Fiesta river parades still sponsored by San Antonio’s Texas Cavaliers. But the nation was turning its attention toward World War II. After the war the River Walk remained little more than a narrow landscaped canyon between the unsightly backs of buildings facing streets above. The succession of river-level restaurants
near the Houston Street bridge was joined in 1946 by Casa Rio, at the Market Street bridge over the Great Bend, but no other commercial development soon occurred. The River Walk, seldom visited, became sufficiently unsafe to be declared off-limits for the city’s military personnel. In 1952 a group of businessmen so disregarded the integrity of Hugman’s concept that an automobile bridge crossing the river to a parking garage was proposed at a level only slightly higher than one of Hugman’s quaint arching bridges a stone’s throw away.

By this time, members of the San Antonio Conservation Society had recognized the appeal of Hugman’s design and mounted a full campaign against the proposed bridge. The society’s first president, Emily Edwards, who in 1924 authored a puppet show called “The Goose With the Golden Eggs” to promote the range of unique aspects in San Antonio, rewrote her original script to focus on the uniqueness of the river. Although Conservation Society efforts did not succeed and the bridge was built, broad attention had been brought to the plight of the River Walk. In 1959 appliance wholesaler David J. Straus encouraged the chamber of commerce to commission California’s Marco Engineering Company, designer of Disneyland, to come up with a way to fix the River Walk. Its plan, however, completed in 1961, horrified Straus and others with its similarity to an amusement park. The Marco proposal was immediately shelved. But the episode so unnerved San Antonio’s Chapter of the American Institute of Architects that it formed a committee, headed by Cyrus Wagner, to make renderings for careful renovations of facades of buildings visible from the river. Committee member Ignacio Torres translated River Walk into Paseo del Rio, a term favored for many years. David Straus lobbied building owners on the value of opening businesses at the river level. The efforts coalesced with planning for San Antonio’s world’s fair, HemisFair ’68, on a downtown site just beyond the easternmost leg of the Great Bend. An extension of the bend dug a third of a mile east ended as a lagoon beside the fair’s exhibition hall and theater. When the fair ended, the exhibition hall, theater, and nearby arena became a convention center that dramatically revitalized the city’s convention industry. Fair visitors and convention goers could follow the River Walk to the first major hotels built in San Antonio since the Great Depression. One, the Hilton Palacio del Rio, went up near the intersection of the Great Bend and its new extension. Around the bend to the northwest, the offending automobile bridge was taken down, and the parking garage it reached was replaced with a building of the new La Mansion del Rio hotel. The River Walk at last had pedestrian traffic sufficient to sustain commercial development.
In the decades since 1968, hotels, restaurants, and shops have multiplied along the River Walk, guided by a variety of agencies monitoring aspects from building setbacks to lighting to semitropical plantings to noise levels. The River Walk was first adorned in Christmas lights in 1975. At that time, Joske’s president William W. McCormick and other civic leaders were concerned with a decrease in downtown commerce. Working with the group Downtown Inc., McCormick suggested stringing Christmas lights in the trees along the San Antonio River Walk, in addition to normally decorated buildings. That first year, Joske’s and Sears supplied the lights, and city maintenance workers provided the labor. The project has grown into a major event and draws thousands of tourists to the River Walk during the Christmas season every year. The River Walk extension was itself extended in 1988 to form a lagoon around the glass-fronted Rivercenter Mall, which had more than 100 retail outlets on three levels. In 2001 yet another extension of the extension offered access deep into the newly-enlarged convention center complex. An eleven-year project for a three-mile flood control tunnel beneath all of downtown was completed by 1998, months before a storm that would earlier have caused major flooding outside the protected Great Bend. The improved flood control facilitated extension of the River Walk, a goal of Mayor Phil Hardberger, far beyond Hugman’s original project. In 2009 on Hardberger’s last day in office, the outgoing mayor, riding in a barge, opened the newly-landscaped riverbanks through a lock and cruised northward along a once derelict two-mile section through decaying neighborhoods, soon to undergo major River Walk-inspired gentrification. Navigation ends at the renovated Pearl Brewery complex at Grayson Street, but improvements and trails are extending on nearly to the San Antonio River’s source, now on the campus of the University of the Incarnate Word. South of Hugman’s original project, navigation ends at a dam at Nueva Street, just below the southern end of the Great Bend. Beyond, improvements through the King William Historic District were completed by a San Antonio River Authority project in 1968. South of that, landscaping and hiking and biking trails to the farthest Spanish
mission was completed in 2013. The broad paved flood channel that had replaced the river’s original winding course through that area decades earlier was replaced by a narrow channel winding again, like the river’s original course. Original native trees and grasses have been replanted along the way. Added to new sections of the River Walk were more than a dozen public art works and designs by noted artists funded by the private San Antonio River Foundation, formed in 2004.

Earlier, as the River Walk was approaching Robert H. H. Hugman’s original vision for its success, he at last received public acclaim for his rigid adherence to his dream. In 1978, two years before his death, the city feted Hugman as he struck one of the new bells hung near the stage of the 1939 Arneson River Theater, one of his signature architectural elements in a design that has evolved into a cornerstone of San Antonio’s tourism industry and a model for sensitive river development.

The San Antonio River Walk’s Museum Reach section reaches the Pearl District. Courtesy of the San Antonio River Authority.
HemisFair '68, held in San Antonio from April 6 through October 6, 1968, was the first officially designated international exposition in the Southwestern United States. The fair, which commemorated the 250th anniversary of the founding of San Antonio, had its beginnings in 1959, when local business leaders, inspired by merchant Jerome K. Harris, started discussing a fair to celebrate the cultural heritage shared by San Antonio and the nations of Latin America—a "Hemis-Fair," as Harris then called it. The idea was endorsed by San Antonio congressman Henry B. Gonzáles. By 1962, when San Antonio Fair, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization, was formed, the aim was a "Fair of the Americas." William R. Sinkin was the first president; a prominent downtown construction magnate, Henry B. Zachry, was named chairman of the board. Two years later, in December 1964, Marshall Steves became president.

Aspirations for the fair grew when Ewen C. Dingwall, who had been vice president and general manager of the Century 21 Exposition in Seattle and was versed in the mechanics of acquiring international status for a world's fair from the Bureau of International Expositions in Paris, was named executive vice president of HemisFair. But by the time the accreditation came (November 17, 1965), Dingwall had resigned (as of May 4, 1965) and been replaced by James M. Gaines as chief executive officer (September 1, 1965). Governor John Connally was named commissioner general.

From the beginning, HemisFair development was financed by a combination of public funding and private underwriting. Public support included $12.2 million from the United States Housing and Home Finance Agency for acquiring and clearing the site, $11
millions in publicly approved city bonds for construction of the convention center and arena, $5.5 million in general revenues from the city of San Antonio for construction of the Tower of the Americas, $10 million from the state primarily for the construction of the Institute of Texan Cultures (now the University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures), and $7.5 million from the United States Congress for the construction of the United States pavilion. Though it was strongly supported by the local business community, local political leaders, and the press, the project had its share of detractors, who questioned the acquisition and preparation of the HemisFair location, a 92.6-acre site on the southeastern edge of the central San Antonio business district. As part of the "old city," a quiet neighborhood known as Germantown, this area had been settled by a diverse group of immigrants of German, Alsatian, Mexican, Polish, and African American ancestry. The neighborhood’s old buildings also reflected this melting pot—from 1850s simple caliche houses to late nineteenth-century Victorian mansions. Many longtime residents took exception to finding their familiar surroundings designated as an urban renewal site. Fair planners, originally headed by O’Neil Ford, primary architect, and Allison Peery, site-development director, received praise for utilizing some twenty existing structures in the final design, but the presence of such architectural mementoes did little to placate opponents.

In September 1966, two years before the fair opened, the HemisFair executive committee released Ford from his contract, possibly because of the committee's reluctance to go along with his plan to save 120 historic structures on the site. Twenty-two survived. Allison Peery assumed Ford's responsibilities. To receive federal funding, HemisFair officials were required by an amendment proposed by Texas senator Ralph Yarborough to preserve as many as possible of the historic structures on the site. The United States Department of Commerce served as the federal watchdog in enforcing this amendment. According to the San Antonio Conservation Society, the
With the "Confluence of Civilizations in the Americas" as its overall theme, HemisFair capitalized on San Antonio's ethnically-mixed cultural heritage and placed particular emphasis on the city as the future center of international commerce and cultural development project displaced a total of 2,239 residences and 686 businesses. It also demolished 1,349 structures and either changed or erased two dozen existing streets.
exhibiting nations included Belgium, Bolivia, the Republic of China, Colombia, West Germany-Berlin, Korea, Panama, Portugal, Switzerland, Thailand, and Venezuela. With less than a month before opening day, and concerned about the small number of Central and South American pavilions, officials arranged for various sponsorships through the Kampmann Foundation in San Antonio, the Good Neighbor Commission in Austin, and the Pan American Forum of Texas to support a Bolivian pavilion; a five-nation Central American pavilion, representing Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica; and special pavilions of the Organization of American States, representing eleven more Latin-American countries, including Brazil, Argentina, and Peru. The United States Pavilion, on a 4.59-acre site adjacent to the international area, echoed the fair's theme with "Confluence USA"—a two-building complex featuring an exhibit structure and a massive circular theater. With additional construction, this was subsequently converted to serve as the Federal Courthouse. The largest pavilion, that of the state of Texas, was called the Institute of Texan Cultures, and mounted displays of many of the ethnic and national groups that formed modern Texas. Admission into HemisFair was two dollars.

The HemisFair theme structure, the 622-foot Tower of the Americas, remained after the fair as well, as did the Convention Center and Arena. Construction of the tower was noteworthy because of the method employed; the 1.4-million-pound tophouse, containing observation decks and a restaurant, was built on the ground and then moved to the top, inch by inch, with twenty-four steel lifting rods. The process took twenty days. Another notable construction feat was the quarter-mile extension of the San Antonio River Walk into the Convention Center complex, which linked the Paseo del Rio development with the fairgrounds. Some visitors, however, citing the
Cultural events at HemisFair included theme exhibits, such as *Confluence/Cosmos*, which presented space exploration, and *El Encanto de un Pueblo*, which displayed 5,000 toys and miniatures from the Alexander Girard Folk Art collection in a series of miniature "views" of Latin-American village life. The fair sponsored a lavish production of Giuseppe Verdi's *Don Carlo*, an exhibit of major art works from the Prado Museum in Madrid sponsored by the government of Spain, touring stage shows, performances by celebrity entertainers, and appearances by such groups as the Ballet Folklórico de México and the Bolshoi Ballet from Russia.

Major corporate exhibitors with individual pavilions included Eastman Kodak, Ford Motor Company, General Electric, General Motors, Gulf Oil Corporation, Humble Oil (now Exxon Company, U.S.A.), IBM, RCA, and Southwestern Bell. Frito Lay/Pepsi-Cola (see Frito-Lay Corporation) presented a spectacular outdoor event, "Los Voladores de Papantla" (The Flying Indians), and Coca-Cola's pavilion featured the Krofft puppets. Institutional exhibitors included Alive, Incorporated, and the Mormon Church.

HemisFair, which opened in the spring of 1968 with an announced start-up cost of $156 million, was financially troubled from the beginning. Attendance never matched expectations, and the fair lost money, a reported $7.5 million, despite Mayor Walter McAllister's pledge that the exposition would not cost San Antonio taxpayers "a thin dime." On the other hand the fair attracted more than 6.3 million visitors and focused international attention on the city and state. But the site did not become the permanent unifying element that its planners had envisioned. Instead, multiple uses were found for the permanent structures that were left on HemisFair grounds, such as the Tower of the Americas and the Institute of Texan Cultures.
In 1988 the site was renamed HemisFair Park. In 2009 the Hemisfair Park Area Redevelopment Corporation was established by the San Antonio city council, and in 2012 a master plan was approved with the mission to restore historic buildings and provide retail space as well as encourage residential development comparable to the pre-HemisFair days. The redevelopment project also sought to expand the park with the inclusion of more green space, courtyards, and arts and cultural enhancements. In retrospect, many historians acknowledged the HemisFair’s significance as a “crossroads in San Antonio history,” that raised the profile of the city both nationally and internationally and served as a precursor to other economic and cultural developments in the city. To commemorate the fair’s fiftieth anniversary, Viva Hemisfair took place at the renovated HemisFair Park on April 6–8, 2018, and included art and historical exhibits, food, concerts, and other events. In addition to commemorating the history of the HemisFair, this weekend celebration also sought to acknowledge and honor the neighborhood that the 1968 fair had displaced.
San Antonio Missions National Historical Park was established on November 10, 1978, by the joint efforts of the Catholic Archdiocese of San Antonio, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the San Antonio Conservation Society, and the United States Department of the Interior. The park includes the sites of San José y San Miguel de Aguayo Mission, which was restored in the 1930s, and three sister missions, Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de la Espada. An additional property exists in Floresville, Texas—Mission Espada’s off-site livestock operation Rancho de las Cabras. The park began operation on April 1, 1983, under the direction of José A. Cisneros, who was appointed superintendent in September 1979.

Initial restoration work began on San José Mission in 1933. Congressman F. Maury Maverick and Archbishop Arthur J. Drossaerts had agreed to work for the formation of a mission park. The church, Bexar County, and the San Antonio Conservation Society hired architect Harvey P. Smith to coordinate the restoration of San José. Local authorities agreed to furnish materials, and federal relief agencies provided labor. By 1935, in preparation for the Texas Centennial, the United States Department of the Interior and the Texas Centennial Commission agreed to work to preserve San José and other historic sites. The agreement of 1941 among the National Park Service, the Texas State Parks Board, and the San Antonio Conservation Society formalized the joint efforts of local, state, and national agencies to preserve the mission as a historic site. This document assured the Catholic Church of the right to retain title to the
mission church; empowered the parks board to preserve, manage, and interpret its mission properties; and enabled the Department of the Interior to designate San José Mission as a national historic site.

Once San José was established as a state park and declared a national historic site, local interest turned to joining all four missions along the San Antonio River into a single national park. Through the efforts of the local congressional delegation, headed by Representative Abraham Kazen, a bill authorizing a park was introduced and passed in 1978. In the Senate, Lloyd Bentsen introduced the bill, which was cosponsored by John G. Tower. The park was authorized to acquire the four missions and adjacent lands, a total of 475 acres, through purchase, donation, exchange, and cooperative agreements. In a subsequent cooperative agreement signed on February 20, 1983, the National Park System agreed to provide for the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of missions Concepción, San José, San Juan Capistrano, and Espada. Concerns over the issue of separation of church and state were resolved in a legal opinion by the Department of Justice on December 2, 1982, allowing the National Park Service management of the missions, while the archdiocese continued use of the missions as active parish churches. Additional agreements with the city and the San Antonio River Authority gave the National Park Service authority to use its lands along the river for historical-park purposes; recreational use remained under the auspices of the city Parks and Recreation Department and the river authority. In 1995 the National Park Service acquired Rancho de las Cabras in Floresville from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

In 1982 the park had also acquired a donated scenic easement over San Juan Acequia, and by the early 1990s various public and private groups, including the National Park Service and the San Antonio River Authority, worked to raise funds to restore the historic water flow in the irrigation canal. During San Antonio’s missions era, Indian
residents had excavated an extensive network of ditches, called **acequias**, off of the river to provide water to irrigate the farmlands of each mission. While urban development in San Antonio compromised most of the mission acequias, two of the original ditches remained flowing and in use—the Espada Acequia and the San Juan Acequia, both currently managed by the National Park Service.

The San Juan Acequia has remained intact since construction began in 1731; however, water flow was halted in 1958 when the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the San Antonio River, effectively cutting off its headwaters. While the San Juan Dam remains visible in its original location within the San Antonio River, its utility was terminated during the 1958 river channelization. However, after a decades-long restoration initiative, water returned to the 6.7-mile San Juan Acequia in 2011. Since then, the National Park Service has begun to develop a Spanish colonial-style demonstration farm at Mission San Juan to illustrate and teach the Spanish-style agriculture that took place almost 300 years ago.

The Mission Reach project was initiated in 2008 by the San Antonio River Authority, the city of San Antonio, and several other partners to connect downtown San Antonio to all four missions within the National Park Service boundary by way of a 15-mile hike-and-bike trail. The eight-mile section of the “Mission Reach” trail was completed in 2013 and includes landscaping, walkways, and recreational features along the San Antonio River. Visitation to San Antonio Missions National Historical Park grew from 521,705 in 2013 to 1,395,337 in 2014 with this increased accessibility. Portions of this trail are maintained by the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. The entire park contains almost 950 acres, including 137 acres proposed as park boundary expansion and enacted by the United States Congress in 2013.

Since 1983 Los Compadres, a non-profit friends group, has helped raise funds for the continued preservation of the missions. By 2015 Los Compadres had donated more
than $2 million to fund projects such as the restoration of the San José Grist Mill, the development of the demonstration farm at Mission San Juan, and many interpretive and educational resources. Los Compadres is dedicated to promoting pride in San Antonio’s rich cultural heritage and enhancing the historical value of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

On July 5, 2015, the Alamo and the missions of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park were designated a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—the first such designation in Texas and one of twenty-three in the United States. The first San Antonio World Heritage Festival, commemorating the one-year anniversary of World Heritage Site designation (as well as honoring the centennial of the establishment of the National Park Service), was held at the park in September 2016.

In addition to the four mission compounds, the National Park Service operates a visitor’s center and museum at Mission San José and smaller visitor’s contact stations and museums at each mission site. The Western National Parks Association also operates a bookstore inside the visitor’s center at Mission San José. Park rangers are available daily for scheduled tours and to provide visitors with informational and educational resources.