

Next Meeting

Wednesday, August 7

La Fonda Restaurant

8633 Crownhill Blvd

Dinner: 6:30 Meeting 7:30

Speaker:

Matthew Elvesson

Office of Historic Preservation

City of San Antonio

Presentation:

The Spanish Colonial

Powder House



August 1

Roger Valdez

August 10

Julie Soto

August 16

Joaquin Faz

August 14

Emma Vela

August 21

J.J. Zavala

August 28

Deborah Guerra

Governor

Joe Perez

Deputy Governor

Alex Zamora

Treasurer

Manny Rodriguez

Secretary

Briana Perez

Drum Major

Ricardo Rodriguez

Chaplain

Joe González

Upcoming Events

Saturday, August 10 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Joe Perez will give a presentation to the 1718 San Antonio Founding Families & Descendants group.

Saturday, August 17 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Battle of Medina History Symposium

Thursday, September 5 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Unveiling of new U.S. quarter coin – Trinity University

New Member

Dr. Jason Bourgeois

The Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez are proud to welcome Dr. Jason Bourgeois as the newest member into our San Antonio Chapter. He already dons a Louisiana Regiment uniform, which he wore to our 4th of July Patriotic Ceremony. He is of 18th-century colonial Louisiana ancestry. He descends from patriots who fought under Gálvez and under the cross of Burgundy flag against the British at Fort Bute/Manchac and Baton Rouge in September of 1779 during the American Revolution. We extend a hearty welcome to Dr. Jason Bourgeois as the newest member of our chapter!

Sunset Tour – Seeing History From a Different Light

On Saturday, July 20th, some members of our chapter participated in an event at the Landmark Inn in Castroville. The event was called, “Sunset Tour – Seeing History From a Different Light” and consisted of reenactors representing various time frames, staffing tables at different stops on the tour. Members of our chapter who participated are Stella González, representing a Tejana; Joe Perez, representing a Granadero; and Joe González representing a Franciscan Friar.



Congratulations to the Faz and Johnson Families

We extend our congratulations to chapter members Joaquin and Pauline Faz, whose grandson, Colin Faz Johnson was awarded the Gloria Cadena scholarship given by Los Bexareños Genealogical and Historical Society.

In the photo to the right, Edward Garcia of the Bexareños is presenting the certificate to Colin Faz Johnson at their July meeting.



SAVE THE DATES!
NATIONAL MEETING

November 15 & 16, 2019



Order of
Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez

New Orleans, Louisiana

Book your room by the 15th September!

Hotel St. Marie

Deluxe \$179 - Courtyard Room \$197 plus tax per night

Sunday (optional) \$129 & \$139 plus tax per night

Please note: Parking add'l \$34 plus tax per night

Book online at www.hotelstmarie.com

Access code: GALVEZ

or phone: 800-366-2743

Please identify as: Granaderos y Damas de Galvez



Recent Articles on the Internet

It's Never Too Late to Correct History

This is an opinion piece that mentions Gálvez from the GoSanAngelo.com website.
<https://www.gosanangelo.com/story/opinion/readers/2019/07/05/reader-its-never-too-late-correct-history/1632438001/>

Celebrate, Reflect on Today's Meaning

This is an opinion piece that mentions Gálvez from the American Press.com website.
https://www.americanpress.com/opinion/editorials/celebrate-reflect-on-today-s-meaning/article_2b7bf8e2-9ec6-11e9-a5e0-b36583920627.html

More Photos From the 4th



Early Mail Service in Texas, Part V: U.S. Statehood Period

By Rueben M. Perez



Thus far, we have discussed early mail service up to when Texas became an independent country, The Republic of Texas. From here we will venture into Texas annexation into the United States of America as the 28th state by a formal transfer from the Republic of Texas made on December 29, 1845. On February 1, 1861, the state of Texas declared succession from the United States and on March 2, 1861, Texas joined the Confederates States of America. In 1870, the United States Congress readmitted Texas into the Union.

During the Republic, many post offices in Texas had already been established and routes to transport the mail continued to be used when Texas obtained Statehood. As early as 1840, mail traveled by stage routes already established, but only three routes provided reliable service. The Texas population was expanding between 1846-1855 as counties were being established and population increased, especially in Northeast Texas, making it necessary to expand mail routes. In the Southwest, the military build-up during the Mexican-American War was responsible for the expansion of mail routes.



In May, 1846, the New Orleans postmaster dispatched Henry Levy, a distribution clerk, to Point Isabel (later incorporated as Port Isabel) in Texas to facilitate transportation of the mail to U.S. troops on the Rio Grande during the Mexican-American War and to collect mail at Point Isabel to be sent to New Orleans via military transport vessels.

Initially handled at Point Isabel, mail distribution was later transferred to Brazos Santiago in April 1847. With U.S. troops occupying Mexico, mail was transported to distribution offices and then transported to New Orleans. Special occupational post offices were set up in Mexico to facilitate the handling of the mail.

Houston, TX
to Austin, TX
circa 1849

5c 1847 issue prepaid the
less than 300 mile rate on
letter carried by stage
from Houston to Austin.

One of only six (6) covers
franked with the 5c 1847
issue originating in Texas.

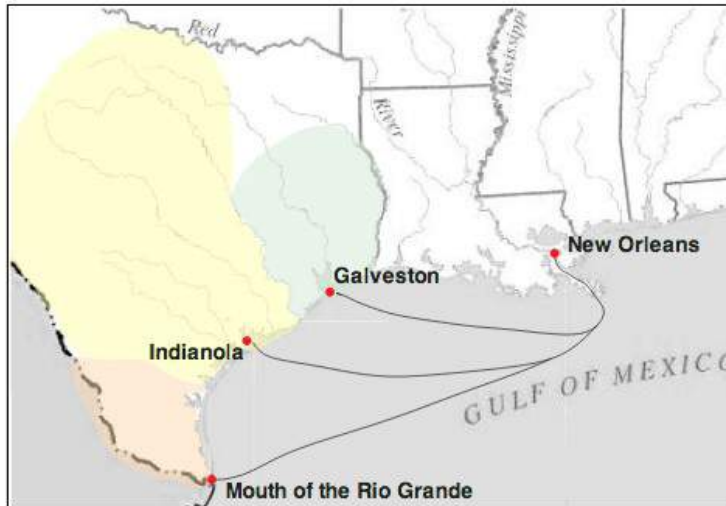


Almost coincidental with Texas' admission to the Union, the U.S. Post Office Department issued its first adhesive stamps for the prepayment of postage of mail. The use of U.S. stamps on Texas mail was an unmistakable announcement of Texas' new statehood status.

By 1857, San Antonio became the major distributing post office in Southwest Texas. A local drop rate on a letter was 1 cent. A letter being mailed from Seguin, TX to Charlotte, NC in 1857, prepaid rate, was 3c traveling from Seguin to Indianola then by contract steamer to New Orleans for distribution to its destination. A letter going from Indianola, TX to Aix-en-Provence, France, cost 15c. A letter mailed from Bright Star, TX to Napa, CA was taken to Shreveport by stage, placed on contract to a steamboat on the Red River, taken to New Orleans and then traveled via Panama to California.

The contract mail route, by water, from Shreveport to New Orleans on the Red River had already been established before Texas joined the Union. Inland Water routes were established in Texas as early as 1846 between Galveston and Houston. For several years, the shallow draft steamer *S.M. Williams* was used to transport the mails between the two towns.

COASTAL WATERWAYS



New Orleans, LA was the distributing post office for the majority of mail flowing into and out of Texas. Mail to out-of-state destinations was directed to the following ports for transportation to New Orleans aboard contract vessels.

Southeast Texas mail - Galveston

Central and Western Frontier mail - Indianola

Southern Rio Grande Valley mail - Mouth of the Rio Grande River

Overseas mail as from Fort Davis, TX to Denmark was routed in the Texas Frontier through San Antonio to Indianola by stagecoach, transported to New York by steamer where it was carried to Europe aboard ship.

OVERLAND MAIL

In 1851, a mail route was opened from San Antonio to El Paso and into New Mexico. That route was extended to the west coast in 1857. In 1858, the Butterfield Overland Mail route connected north Texas to El Paso where it entered and exited El Paso.



Butterfield Overland- San Antonio- to San Diego line

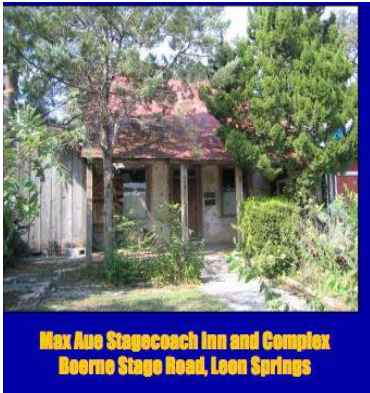


In Guadalupe Mountains National Park, ruins of the Butterfield station at Pinery can still be seen

Authorized by Congress in the mid-19th century, the transcontinental mail route passed through Texas for 740 miles of rugged country. During its four-year existence, it helped carry mail from one side of the country by using a lower, snow-free route. Henry Skillman obtained a mail contract to provide service from San Antonio, El Paso, and Santa Fe with his first stage rolling out of San Antonio on November 3, 1851. Competition set in when another contract was put out for bid for mail service delivery to San Diego, California. The contract was awarded to James Birch who owned 400 mules and horses and employed 65 men to run the 1,476-mile route that took 27 days to travel. Mules provided most of coverage, giving the enterprise the nickname, "The Jackass Mail". The next major contract was awarded to John W. Butterfield and associates, William G. Fargo and Henry Wells, initiating services to San Diego, California.

With the financial support, Butterfield's Overland Mail Co. built stage stops every 15 to 20 miles apart, dug cisterns for water, and put up corrals for 1,200 horses and 600 mules. In addition, the company purchased 250 stagecoaches, or celerity wagons, freight, and water wagons and kept nearly 800 drivers, conductors, station keeps, blacksmiths and wranglers on the payroll. Butterfield's famous quote was, **"Remember boys, nothing on God's earth must stop the United States mail."** These words are echoed today, **"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of nights stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."** To my disappointment, this is not an official creed or motto of the United States Postal Service.

I can only imagine trying to survive traveling by stage coach on bumpy, dusty, and dangerous roads. The cost was about \$200, one way, today, that would equal to about \$5,000. Stage coach Inns provided the travelers with rest and kept the horses changed. Today, one can still see some remnants of the old stagecoach inns in San Antonio, (below).



Huebner Onion Stagecoach Inn



Leon Springs Stagecoach Inn



Selma, Texas Stagecoach Inn

In and around San Antonio are other stage coach inns. I remember one on Scenic Loop in Helotes that stood out majestically. By the year 1882, the stagecoach era was coming to an end with the advent of the railroad carrying passengers, freight, and the United States mail with safety, speed, and convenience.

THE TIMES ARE A-CHANGING FOR MAIL DELIEVERY SERVICE



Mailboxes became a necessity in 1863 with widespread use of stamps and more people sending letters. Also, **Free City Delivery** allowed mail service directly to the homes without charge.

Collecting Mail began in the 1850s so people didn't have to go to the post office to send letters. At first, boxes were attached to lampposts, but replaced by free standing mailboxes.

The Horseless Wagon was being developed in 1896 offering faster and more affordable means to carry the mail over land with horses and stagecoaches. In 1901, the first contract was issued to use automobiles to carry mail.



In 1860, William H. Russell organized what would become the **Pony Express**. The Pony Express cut down delivery time to less than half of the stagecoach, but soon would be replaced by trains.



The first **Railway Mail Service** started in 1832 and the first railroad postal route was established in 1864, when a general distribution postage car went into service. In 1930, over 10,000 iron horses carried the mail and by 1965 the number was reduced to 1,970. Railway mail was terminated in June 1977.



Airmail was considered by the Post Office Department to be a new mode of carrying the mail. With the advance of communications systems, widespread use for airplanes increased and commercial airlines began to take over. Mail delivery service took to the air with the first flight by commercial airmail starting in 1926.

The first commercial line to serve Texas was National Air Transport, one of the private companies incorporated to take advantage of the Air Mail Act of 1925. On May 12, 1926, a National plane left Love Field and flew to Chicago with the first air mail.

We have covered early mail service in Texas up to this point. The last two parts will be as interesting as well.

