

FYI on Texas History by Bob Heinonen

A Free Newsletter from Texas Heroes

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www.TexasHeroes.net

PLANNING

We are already planning for events into next year:

October 25

Stephen F. Austin Birthday Party in Angleton

The month of December

A Cowboy's Christmas tour across Texas

February 28 - March 1

Texas Independence Celebration at
Washington-on-the-Brazos

March 26-28

Texas State Historical Association Annual
Meeting in Austin

April 18

San Jacinto Symposium in Houston

We hope you will put these events on your calendars and join us there.



The 70-foot tall Stephen F. Austin Statue at Angleton

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF STEPHEN F. AUSTIN

Part 11: Mexico's Independence

by Bob Heinonen

Stephen F. Austin arrived back in San Antonio de Bexar in December of 1821. For the next three months, Austin and his men surveyed his colony and began building structures. But then, Governor Martinez informed Austin that the newly formed Mexican Congress had rejected his contract.

Mexico had been in turmoil under Spain's rule for many years and, in 1811, the Mexican liberals had begun a ten year fight for independence from Spain. In 1813, a major battle was fought in Texas on the Medina River near San Antonio; soldiers loyal to Spain killed a thousand insurgents and then went on to kill hundreds of insurgent sympathizers.

By 1820, through a lot of political maneuverings and changing of sides, Mexico achieved its independence and began trying to reshape itself. It didn't have time to deal with matters such as Austin's empresario contract. Governor Martinez advised Austin to go to the capital of Mexico, Mexico City, to plead his case.

When Stephen F. Austin arrived in the city of Mexico one

month later, he had no friends or acquaintances there, he hardly knew the language, he didn't know the customs of the people and he had barely the money to pay his own expenses but for a few months. Fortunately, within thirty days, Austin was allowed to present the history of his Texas project to the Mexican Congress and he asked for their approval of his contract. They looked at his account of his colonization effort in Texas and asked Austin to wait in the city for their response.

Austin waited in the city for the response of the Mexican Congress...he waited almost a year before they finally approved his empresario contract, and his alone for there were other men now attempting to do the same thing.

One of the provisions of his empresario contract was that, because the Mexican government had not yet been able to establish a government in Texas, Austin was responsible for making the laws within his colony and for enforcing them. Austin accepted that responsibility.

While Austin was waiting for approval of his empresario contract, he was not idle. He learned the language well, he learned the customs of the people and their susceptibilities, and he met the men in power and convinced them that he was not a political threat.

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By the time Austin returned to Texas, it was already June of 1823. When he arrived home with his approved empresario agreement in hand, he was caught by surprise. It turns out his colonists were angry with him....very angry.

Next Month – Part 12: The Work Begins

*Bob Heinonen is the founder of **Texas Heroes** and has been portraying Stephen F. Austin since 1993.
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CURRENT SEPTEMBER BOOKINGS

Day	Organization
8	Atria - Carrollton, Carrollton
13	Dallas Historical Society, Dallas
14	The Bob Bullock Texas History Museum, Austin
15	Meadow Lakes Retirement Community, North Richland Hills
15	Merrill Gardens at Wichita Falls, Wichita Falls
15	Wynwood of Vernon, Vernon
16	Park Central Retirement Community, Amarillo
16	Querencia at Barton Springs, Austin
17	Independence Hill, San Antonio
18	Parkwood Retirement Community, Bedford
22	Three Fountains, Dallas
23	Trinity Terrace, Fort Worth
23	Friends of the Lancaster Library, Lancaster
25	Parc Place Retirement Community, Bedford
25	Forum at Park Lane, Dallas
27	Heritage Society of Houston, Houston
29	The Summit at Westlake Hills, Austin

The list above is the bookings as of the issuance of this newsletter. Check our website for an up-to-date list:

All future bookings, go to <http://www.TexasHeroes.net/thefuture.html>

All clients, go to <http://www.TexasHeroes.net/thepast.html>