



In Search of El dorado

A daily journal of my travels and adventures in my.....Search for Eldorado

Hello to Family & Friends



This was the scene through my windshield when I woke up this morning. He/she is maybe 75 yards away. Not the best of days for sightseeing. Buy hey, it does make for a good day to spend inside visiting museums, right?



Surfside Beach, hmmmmm, let's try Stahlman Park and the crabbing pier. Can't even see the pier in this fog.

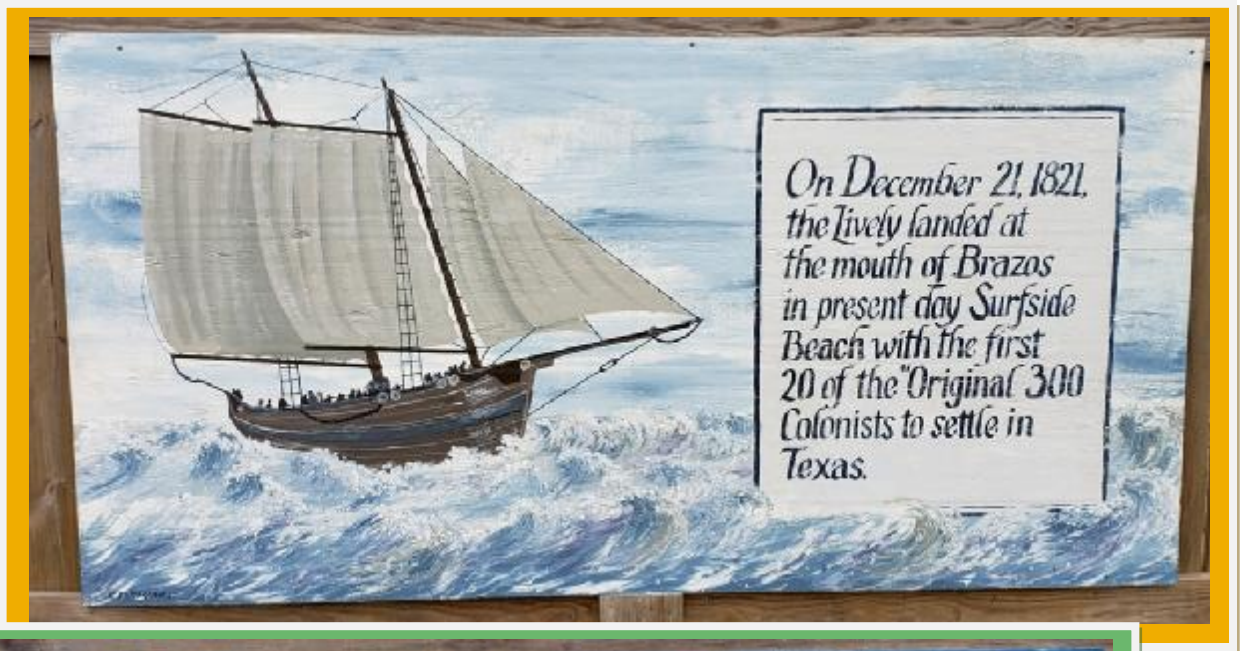
How about a bike ride on the Bluewater HWY Trail? I would probably get electrocuted by my electric bike.

On to the Museum in City Hall – Closed due to Covid.

Last choice, the Fort Velasco Monument, it's outside and hopefully, accessible.



This was a nice surprise. I expected only a plaque or two telling a story. As the sign says, it's a work in progress, but at least an effort is being put forth to preserve some of the local history.



*On December 21, 1821,
the lively landed at
the mouth of Brazos
in present day Surfside
Beach with the first
20 of the "Original 300
Colonists to settle in
Texas.*



These were a couple paintings on 4x8 sheets of plywood on the wall inside the fort. I thought there should be many more telling the story. A great school project.

You can barely see through the gate on the far side of the fort in the fog



The water you see is the Brazos River entering the Gulf of Mexico. Fort Velasco here on the east bank, and Fort Quintana on the opposite shore, guarded the river mouth. Can you see it? Nope, neither can I.



At this point, since I know there aren't many photos today, I thought I would research the history of the forts and put that in here. However, when I went to wikifort.com I found out there are three plaques telling the story of the forts. I must have missed them in the fog. They are not very easy to read, but you can follow the link if you want more information. Basically Velasco is the beginning of the colonization of Texas and the fight to become a Republic.

http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort_Velasco



I left Surfside Beach for Freeport and the Historical Museum. When I parked I noticed a chip in the windshield. I'm pretty sure it happened yesterday. Searching for a glass repair shop, calling in a claim, calling them back because I gave the wrong shop address and phone number, decided I did not have time for lunch and the Museum before 1:00, I just ate lunch and headed north about seven miles for Big G Glass.

While I as there the tech found two more chips, both on the passenger side (no wonder I didn't see them). So I had those fixed also at only \$10 each. While I was in Clute I did a little shopping (actually no shopping as it turned out) to replace my broken broom, broken glasses and obtain an extra mini SD card. Then, I went back to Freeport and the Museum.



This was perfect. A model of Fort Velasco as it looked in 1832.



FORT VELASCO

Spacesuits

Fort Velasco was built in 1830 on the Gulf of Mexico by the Mexican army. It was located at the mouth of the Brazos River - 150 yards from the Gulf waters. That was the same location Stephen F. Austin landed the vessel, *The Lively*, on December 23, 1821 with the first emigrants to Austin's Colony in Texas. The fort was manned with 120 Mexican soldiers with Col. Domingo Ugartechea in charge.

The town of Velasco sprang up there and was a busy port receiving and exporting goods by boat from others areas for many years. Quintana was located on the west side of the Brazos and Velasco was on the east side. In 1891 the town moved farther up the Brazos River, but kept the name, Velasco. Velasco became part of Freeport, Texas when the two towns consolidated in 1957.

The fort was the first real encounter between the Mexicans and Texans. On June 25, 1832 a group of settlers attacked the fort about midnight. The cannon inside the fort could not be lowered enough to put the settlers at close range in danger. So, the protectors of the fort were at great disadvantage.

At the end of the battle it was reported that 7 of the Texans were killed and 27 wounded. The defenders of the fort lost 42 and 70 were wounded.

Texas went on to win independence in 1836 and became a state in the United States in 1845.

The model was made by Dan Kessner in May of 2014

- 1821 - Moses Austin brought 17-18 immigrants into Texas
- 1821 - Mexico won independence from Spain
- 1823 - Stephen F. Austin brought 300 immigrants into Texas
- 1824 - Texas became province of Coahuila to form as state of Coahuila y Tejas
- 1824 - Mexico enacted colonization law
- 1830 - Mexico outlawed further immigration of U.S. citizens to Texas
- 1832 - Texas convention demanded U.S. citizens to immigrate to Texas
- 1832 - Battle of Velasco fought at **Fort Velasco**
- 1836 - Texas declared independence from Mexico
- 1836 - Texas Revolution ended
- 4-21-1836 - Republic of Texas was born**

(A)

FORT QUINTANA

On the West side of Mouth of
BRAZOS RIVER



This is a panoramic of the very cozy reading room/library/documents center in the Museum. Very nice. I would love to have this set-up in my own home.

FREEMONT, TEXAS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1912

Brewster County's Most Complete Newspaper

By JOHN BROWN,
The Freeport Facts

FREEMONT — The new city that sprung up along the new bank of the Brown River in 1911 before it had been named "Freemont" by the general public is the subject of the first issue of the "Freeport Facts," a newspaper published by the "Freeport Facts" company.

The city was created around the sulfur fields three miles to the southwest owned by a powerful northern syndicate. There were deposits thought to be the richest in the world.

When the sulfur was discovered, the company immediately needed land for local facilities and facilities for its workers. When clear title to enough land was secured, the "Freeport Facts" was organized.

A. A. Baffle was the man who took the new land and divided the new city. The first block, containing a long line of lots and streets, followed by an avenue and streets, runs the main street.

LAND SURVEYS and mapped the city made along Park Street to a building. The "Freemont Co." was created and had what it thought would be a company of at least 100 persons. Many of the streets were divided and all of them were graded. The main business street had concrete sidewalks and were now ready for electricity.

When Parker received the first interview, the problem was to get the city started. The first thing to do was to get the city started. The first thing to do was to get the city started.



Fourth Street at Park Avenue, and the building of a railroad track over the river bank to the new depot.

A number of lines connected the new city to the town. The Tarrant line, which was now expected to run line that the line was planned to be made across the river, making it possible to get to the city.

Electricity was also needed, and the line was now being laid. The line was now being laid. The line was now being laid.

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FREEMONT — An early edition of the "Freeport Facts" was published at Freeport, a week after the city was organized. The first issue was published on November 1, 1912.

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One of the first editions of THE FREEMONT FACTS. I have a couple interesting excerpts below.

Named Freeport, its moniker was self-explanatory. The community would feature, in effect, a free port, offering no dockage or wharf charges.

The city was created around the sulfur fields three miles to the southwest owned by a powerful northern syndicate. There were deposits thought to be the richest in the world.

When the sulfur was discovered,

... even lit by electricity.

Willene Parker recalled during one interview the problems with traveling to dances in the city in its infant years.

“We’d have to stop, the boys would have to stop lots of times and get the cows off the road so they could run the car down the highways,” she said.

Some of the first major projects

LONESOME DOVE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

BILL WITTLIFF

FROM THE CLASSIC TELEVISION MINISERIES
BASED ON THE PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING NOVEL BY

LARRY MCMURTRY

A traveling exhibition created by the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University in San Marcos
In partnership with Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities

Digital scans & prints by Joe Pat Davis Framing by John Scott Typography by Lyda Guz

Exhibition co-curated by Carla Ellard & Melissa Huber

For those of you that are LONESOME DOVE fans, the Museum was playing host to the black & white photo exhibit above. I could not take any photos for copyright reasons. It was interesting. I liked some of them, but I did not like the ones where they altered the sky to always be snow white, the ones with “angry” skies and the character close-ups were good.



I bet you're wondering why I took a photo of a locked gate. Atlas Obscura has the answer. Two miles down the road past these gates is The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve *the largest hoard of emergency oil in the world, and the largest repository in the reserve system is stashed inside the Bryan Mound salt dome. Spread across 20 underground caverns, Bryan Mound contains about 250 million barrels of sweet and sour crude, the equivalent of 500 Panamax oil tankers.* The process is rather interesting, but I won't bore you with another three paragraphs and photos. If you're interested in reading more about it, follow this link

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/bryan-mound-strategic-petroleum-reserve>

From Freeport I drove up to Lake Jackson to look for a new broom at Lowes and Home Depot. I had a telescoping one made for RV's which broke sometime in Alabama. I was lax in ordering one, and now with the sand from my night on the beach, I need one. No luck there so on to Angleton and a hardware store and WalMart. I had some luck, but not what I wanted.

Tomorrow is Lake Jackson, so I headed back south while searching for a spot to park for the night. WalMart does not allow overnights here. I wound up on a dead end by the railroad tracks, kind of between an auto repair shop and a church. Nice and quiet unless a train is passing, which I don't mind.

Even though the weather was poor, and is supposed to continue foggy until next Tuesday, I was able to get some shopping done and the RV windshield repaired, so it was a good day. I should be in Corpus Christie by Monday or Tuesday and the weather will finally be turning sunny by then. Unfortunately, the next four days will be like today, along with some rain.

It is what it is. Beats going to the office every day.

Until next time.....