



In Search of El dorado

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

Hello to Family & Friends

Friday, February 26th 2021 Day 40



It's was a short drive to the Texas Air Museum at Stinson Field. As I walked towards the hanger to take a picture of the museum sign, a gentleman exited the building and asked if I was with Harvest Hosts. 'No. I mean, I am with Harvest Hosts, but that's not why I'm here.' I seem to remember checking Harvest Hosts around San Antonio and seeing Stinson mentioned, but it completely slipped my mind until now. I could have been parking here for a few nights, but I think the wifi reception would have been a little sketchy. Anyways, he informed me that they were hit hard by the cold snap last week with frozen pipes and no power until just a few days ago. The place is a mess. He apologized and told me if things go well they will be open tomorrow. I will check back before heading north.

So I made my way over to Mission Concepción after a false stop at the Mission San Jose.



I think this photo turned out rather well.



They must like this type of display down here. These are about three foot by three foot brass, basically a diorama, of the grounds. I believe I had a full size one of the Alamo a couple days ago. Each mission has had one and they are all in pretty rough shape. There is a corresponding legend with numbers and titles, but they are mostly worn off. But I felt this gave a good bird's eye view of the mission.

Mission Concepción

More than a church, Mission Concepción was also a village, fort, school, farm, and ranch.

At the missions the Franciscans gathered the native peoples together, converted them to Catholicism, taught them Spanish culture, and sought to establish Spanish control of the Texas frontier.

Concepción was a village, fort, school, farm, and ranch.

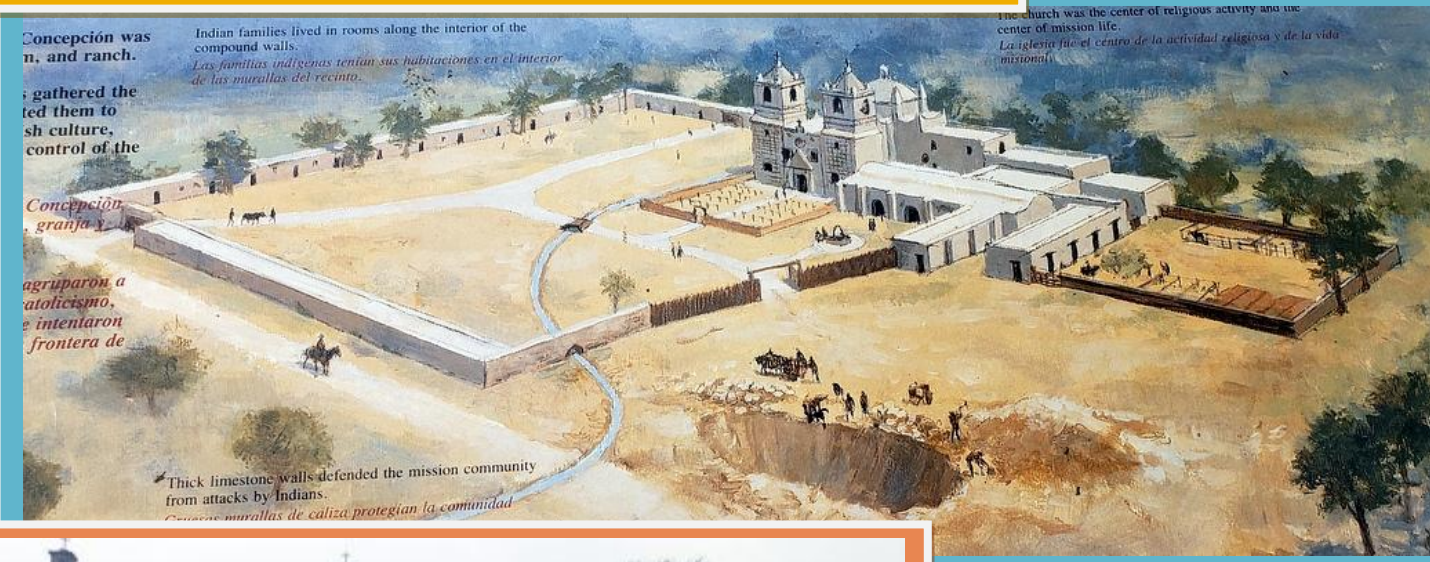
Indian families lived in rooms along the interior of the compound walls.
Las familias indígenas tenían sus habitaciones en el interior de las murallas del recinto.

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Thick limestone walls defended the mission community from attacks by Indians.
Gruesas murallas de caliza protegían la comunidad.

The church was the center of religious activity and the center of mission life.
La iglesia fue el centro de la actividad religiosa y de la vida misionera.



Church and State

In 1493 Pope Alexander VI divided the known world between Spain and Portugal. As head of the Universal Church, Pope Alexander gave the Spanish king authority to occupy the Americas and to christianize the native peoples. In 1508 Pope Julius II granted the king the power of royal patronage to appoint church officials, provide funding, and establish missions.

Well, excuse me! One year after Columbus lands the Pope feels he has the authority to do what he wants with North and South America? No comment.

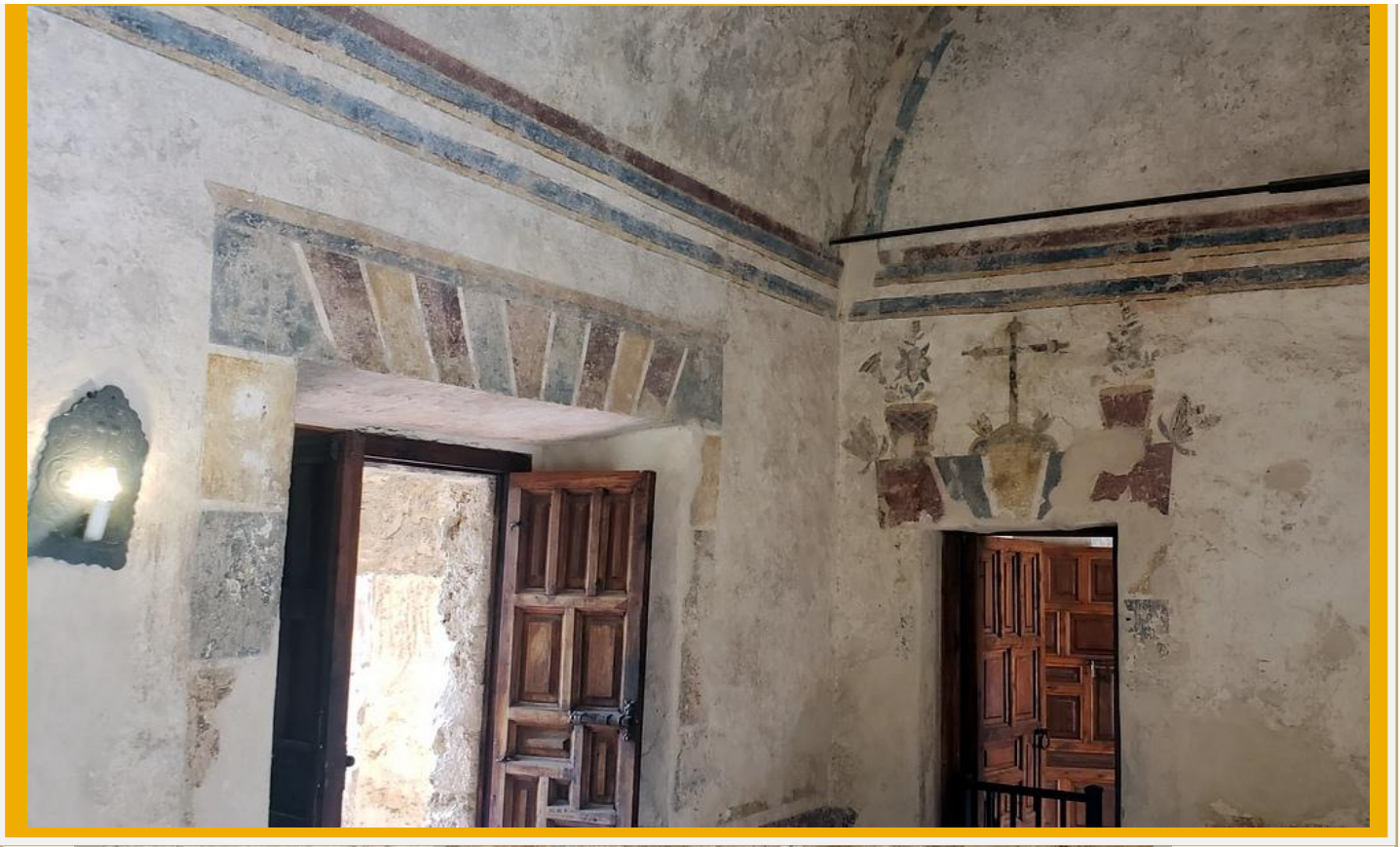
Spanish Missions

Missions in Florida, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California extended the frontiers of New Spain and established the Spanish presence.



I found this very interesting. Just think what this mission must have looked like, decoratively, in its hey day.

Conserving the Wall Paintings



A la the Sistine Chapel, even the ceiling is painted with designs.

Mission Architecture

The church of Mission Concepción was built by Indian, Spanish, and mixed-blood Mestizo artisans under the direction of the Franciscan friars and dedicated on December 8, 1755.

The beautiful church with its elaborate decoration made a dramatic contrast with the frontier austerity of northern New Spain.

Today Concepción is the best preserved and least altered of the Texas missions. Most of what you see, including the wall decoration, is original.

The architectural style is Spanish Baroque with elements of Moorish influence in the arches and windows.



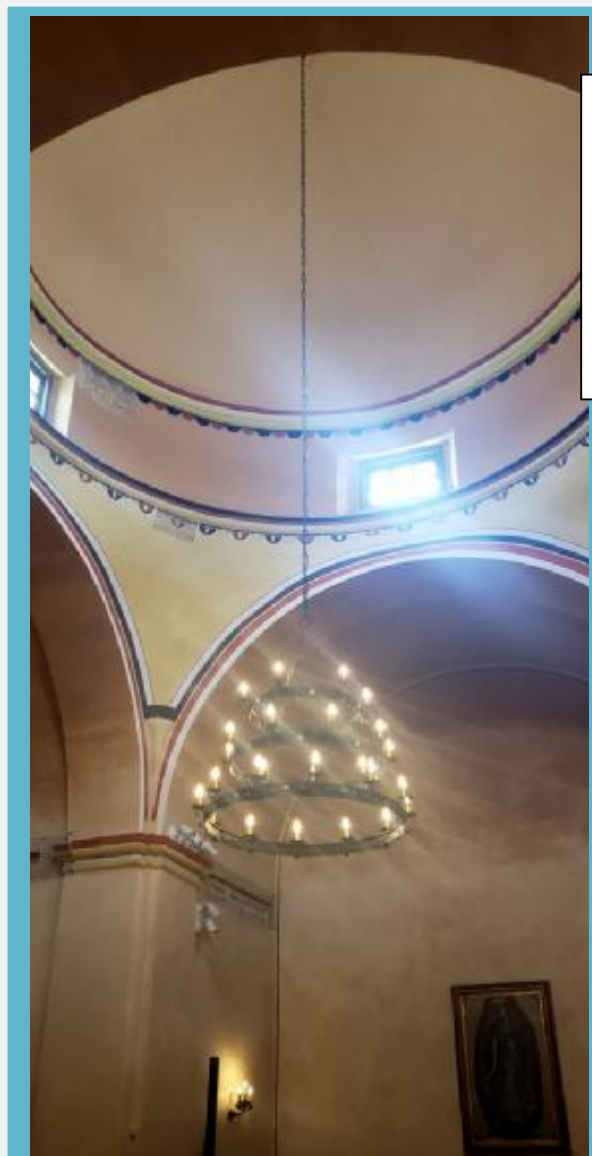
Hmmm....I guess there was another bird's eye view, a little better than the brass diorama.



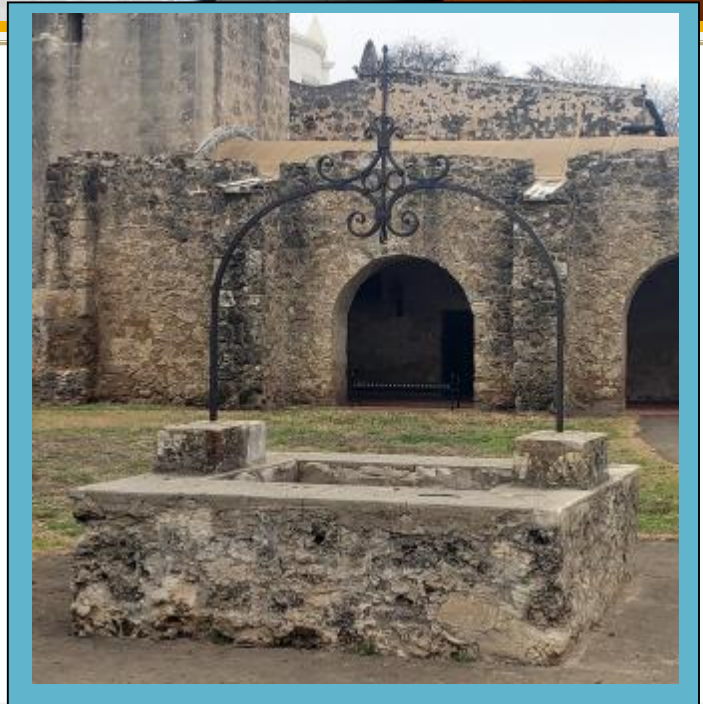
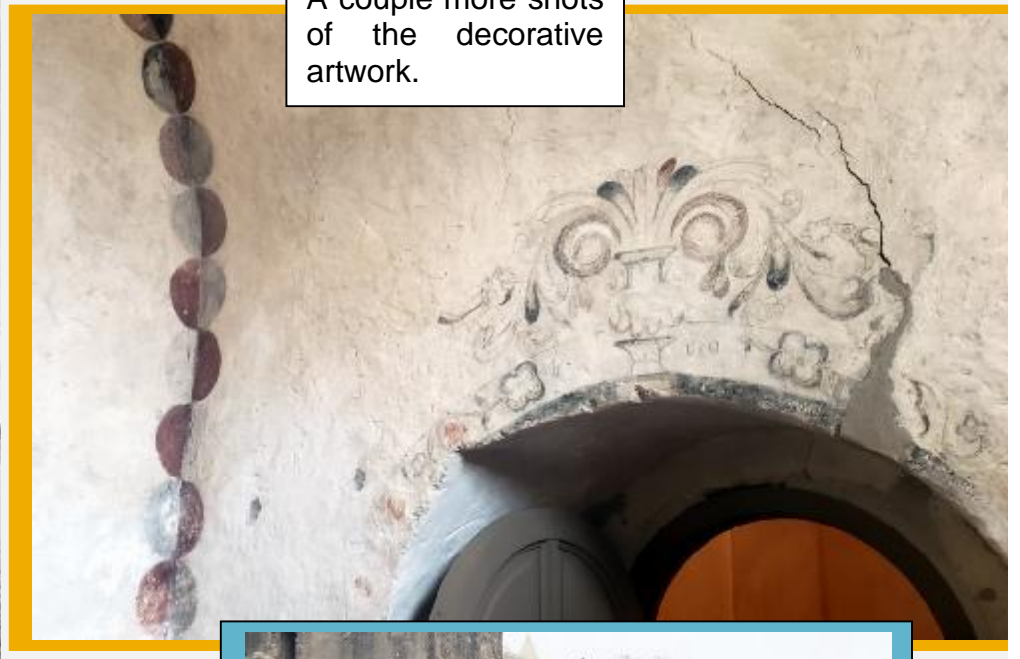
Above – View from the altar.

Left – View into the dome.

Right – View from the front entrance



A couple more shots of the decorative artwork.



The Quarry



This quarry was the source of stone for building Mission Concepción and portions of Mission San José.

Indian and Mestizo laborers used picks and axes to cut grooves in the limestone rock, and bars and wedges to pry up the rough blocks. Stonemasons shaped and finished the stone.

As they built the missions the Franciscans modified European and Moorish architectural traditions to use local materials and local labor.

Unlike the other two missions we visited, this one was just the church and a few rooms, no outlying granary, Indian housing or surrounding walls. All that had been torn down.

With no Air Museum to see I turned to Roadside America and some of their recommendations, the first being Veterans Memorial Plaza with honors to WWII, The Korean War and Vietnam.

Two soldiers in a snow dusted foxhole with rifles, bayonets, grenades and canteens visible.

"NIGHT WATCH"
THIS MEMORIAL MONUMENT, WAS DEDICATED ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 11, 1994. SPONSORED BY "C" COMPANY 20TH INFANTRY BATTALION USMCR. WAS ERECTED TO HONOR AND PAY TRIBUTE TO ALL OUR KOREAN WAR VETERANS. "LET'S REMEMBER OUR FORGOTTEN HEROES".
KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL





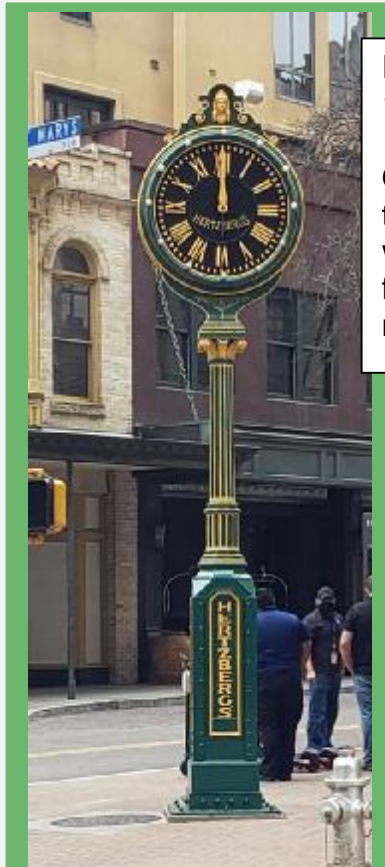
VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

IN HONOR OF THOSE MEN AND WOMEN
WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY
DURING ONE OF ITS MOST TRYING TIMES

On April 30th, 1967 one of the bloodiest battles of the Vietnam War took place at Hill 881 South. Over 50 United States Marines and over 300 North Vietnamese Regulars lost their lives. This scene was taken from that battle, an incident vividly recalled by Austin Dueul, the artist. On January 3rd, 1986, John D Baines commissioned to sculpture Hill 881 South as a lasting tribute to all Vietnam combat veterans. Dedicated Sunday afternoon, November 9th, 1986.

The inscription was harder to read than the one pictured above, so I rendered it here.

HILL 881 SOUTH



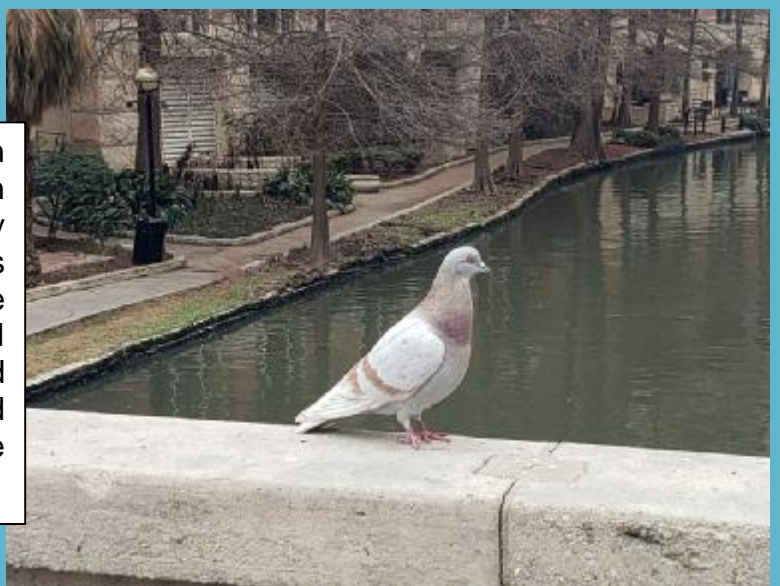
I took a walk to check out The Hertzberg Clock, a historic landmark installed in 1878 in front of the Eli Hertzberg Jewelry Company.

Over to the Tower Insurance building – Built in 1929 as the Smith-Young Tower the owner had the gargoyles installed to keep away evil spirits. I don't think it worked as the crash of '29 halted construction and the building was for sale a few years later. On the river cruise the guide gave more info, including the name of the faces on the next page, but I can't find any info on the web.





As I crossed a bridge this pigeon landed on the parapet. I'm not sure I have ever seen markings like that on a pigeon before. A very beautiful bird. Just looked it up and found it's a Rock Pigeon and the markings are a little unusual. From the river cruise I thought I could get into the hotel across the street and get a better photo of the gargoyles. I found the Westin was the best choice and took the elevator to the twelfth floor.





No windows on that side so I went up to fifteen. No windows again, but there was a maid who had just finished cleaning a room. I asked if I could go in for a picture and she directed me next door where a maintenance man was painting a room. He explained that she had just finished sanitizing the other room but since he was painting it would be ok. This photo doesn't look much closer than the one from the street does it? He offered to take me up to the roof for another shot, but it was only one floor so I declined the offer.



I was not really impressed with this building. It looks a lot like several on the east side of Gilles back in Milwaukee. I should not have brought Gilles up. But when I turned around I found a much more interesting building. Let's see if you're of the same opinion.

DESIGNED BY ERNEST P. BEHLES AND BUILT BY THE GORDON-JONES CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, THE THREE-STORY CONCRETE AND MASONRY TOLTEC APARTMENT HOUSE WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1913 FOR DR. AUGUSTUS MAVERICK, WHO WAS TRAGICALLY MURDERED BEFORE ITS COMPLETION. THE MAVERICK FAMILY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN SAN ANTONIO'S EARLY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT. TENANTS INCLUDED FAMILY MEMBERS WHO OWNED THE PROPERTY UNTIL 1996. PROMINENT ASPECTS OF THE BUILDING INCLUDE ITS U-SHAPED LAYOUT, WHITE STONE DETAILING ON THE EXTERIOR RED BRICK, AND A CONCRETE AND CAST IRON STAIRCASE THAT RISES FROM THE BASEMENT TO THE THIRD FLOOR. CONSTRUCTED IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE, THE BUILDING'S DISTINCT ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY IS PRESERVED IN ITS ORIGINAL DESIGN, HARDWARE AND FINISHES.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK - 2014
MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

MAVERICK-CARTER HOUSE

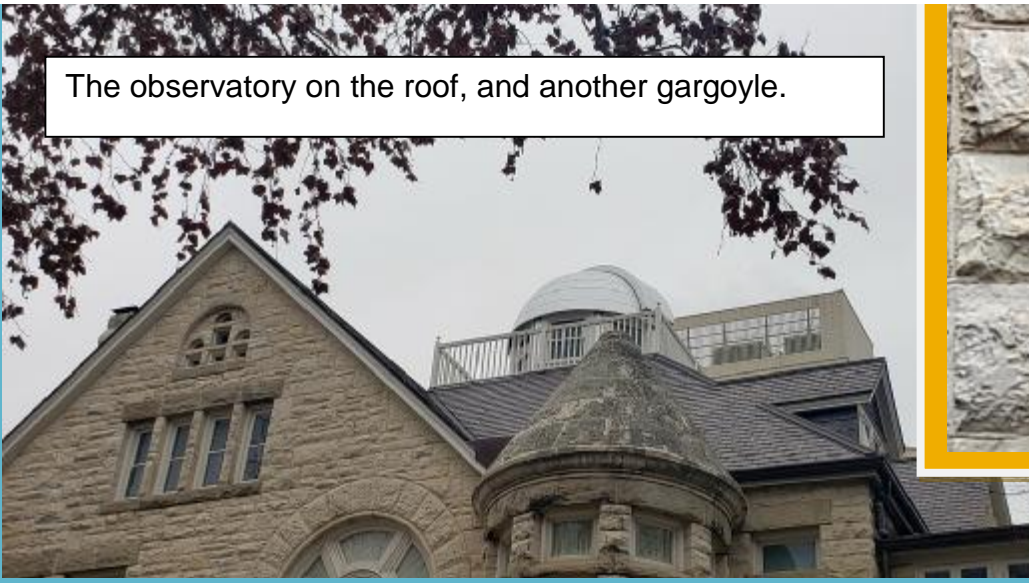


THE THREE-STORY LIMESTONE MAVERICK-CARTER HOUSE WAS CONSTRUCTED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF SAN ANTONIO'S CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT IN 1893 FOR REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER WILLIAM HARVEY MAVERICK, SON OF TEXAS DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE SIGNER SAMUEL AUGUSTUS MAVERICK. WHEN ORIGINALLY BUILT, THE HOME WAS SITUATED ON THE BANKS OF THE SAN ANTONIO RIVER, WHICH WAS RECHANNELED FOR FLOOD CONTROL PURPOSES IN 1920. MAVERICK RAISED HIS CHILDREN IN THE HOME AND RESIDED HERE UNTIL 1910, WHEN HE SOLD THE HOUSE TO HIS SON, ROBERT.

ATTORNEY AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE TEXAS BAR ASSOCIATION, H.C. CARTER, PURCHASED THE HOUSE IN 1914. CARTER'S SECOND WIFE, ALINE (BADGER), CONVERTED THE FIRST FLOOR LIBRARY INTO A CHAPEL AND CONSTRUCTED AN OBSERVATORY ON THE ROOF OF THE HOME CA. 1925. ALINE, A NOTED POET, ARTIST, ASTRONOMER, MUSICIAN AND HUMANITARIAN, SERVED AS POET LAUREATE OF TEXAS FROM 1947-49. ALINE ALSO TAUGHT ASTRONOMY TO CHILDREN AND HOSTED AN ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR SAN ANTONIO ORPHANS HERE IN HER HOME. AFTER RAISING THREE CHILDREN AND H.C.'S DEATH IN 1948, ALINE CONTINUED TO LIVE HERE UNTIL HER DEATH IN 1972; THE HOME REMAINS IN THE CARTER FAMILY.

THE 23-ROOM HOME WAS DESIGNED BY PROMINENT SAN ANTONIO ARCHITECT ALFRED GILES (1853-1920), WHO ALSO DESIGNED AT LEAST NINE OTHER BUILDINGS FOR THE MAVERICK FAMILY. THE RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE FAÇADE FEATURES RUSTICATED STONE WALLS AND SILLS, ROUND AND ARCHED WINDOWS, A ROUNDED TOWER WITH A CONICAL ROOF, A PORTE-COCHERE AND A SLATE ROOF. THE HOUSE WAS DESIGNED WITH MULTIPLE PARLORS AND BEDROOMS. SIGNIFICANT INTERIOR MATERIALS INCLUDE BIRD'S EYE MAPLE AND OAK WAINSCOTING, HARD PINE DOORS AND WINDOW FRAMES, SANDSTONE MANTELPIECES AND PARQUET FLOORS.

The observatory on the roof, and another gargoyle.



Col. Theodore Roosevelt and the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry on top of San Juan Hill, Cuba, 1898.



The Menger Bar, where Teddy Roosevelt did much of his recruiting for the Roughriders. After checking out the memorabilia I asked the barkeep what Teddy's drink would have been (I thought I might have the same and toast one of the most popular Presidents in history). "Bourbon" he says, or a Mint Julep. Nix the bourbon, I'll stick with whiskey and seven-up.

Roosevelt's Rough Riders, Troop D, In Training,
San Antonio, May 1898



The tale of the Menger Bar is about as culturally diverse and historically heavy as its hometown of San Antonio, Texas. And though the town is so often associated with the Alamo and Texas' fight for independence, few may know its connection to Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders from the Spanish-American War. In fact, it was in the Menger Bar itself that Roosevelt, sitting at one of the two large round tables that still grace the space, recruited the men of the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, better known as the Rough Riders. This eclectic group rode with the future 26th President of the United States in Cuba before the Treaty of Paris was signed to end the war in 1898. The bar's association with this famed group is something of which Menger Hotel employees are quite proud. The bar's namesake, William Menger, immigrated from what is now Germany in the 1840s.

He married a local widow and opened a brewery next to her boarding house. In 1859, the boarding house was enlarged and became the Menger Hotel, but it wasn't until 16 years after Menger's death in 1871 that the eponymous bar that we know today was built inside.

The Menger Bar was designed in 1887 as a facsimile of London's House of Lords Pub. The bar's appearance emphasizes the opulence of Victorian decoration. Nearly all of the furnishings are constructed in solid mahogany, from the bar itself to the beveled glass mirrors in mahogany frames.

The furnishings have moved several times over the years, the first in 1910, due to hotel construction. Shortly thereafter, it was vacated during Prohibition and the bar was taken apart and put into storage. It was at this time that a group of local attorneys purchased a section of the dark-stained bar, shortening it so that it could fit in their offices.

It wasn't until 1949 that the establishment moved back to its (hopefully final) resting place inside the Menger Hotel. The bar's many transitions caused it to downsize from its original three rooms that included the bar room, a billiard room, and a reading room, to a two-level room with the bar itself downstairs and additional seating in the balcony above.

With all of the moving the bar has endured, it's a slight miracle that many of its 1887 furnishings, including the cherry wood paneled ceilings, beveled mirrors, and bar (although truncated) remain today to bring visitors back to the venue's 19th-century roots.

Copied over from <https://savingplaces.org/stories/the-menger-hotel-bar-in-san-antonio-texas>

They have some much better photos there also, mainly because the lights are on.



The left photo above is a mirror at which Teddy and another person made a drunken bet as to who could shoot closest to the mirror without breaking it. Right is the bullet hole from Teddy's winning shot. The mirror is still original.

I walked back to the RV and drove back to WalMart for the night.

I will try the Airfield again in the morning, but I'm not holding my breath. Then I will start making my way northward before stopping to visit cousin Jane again, probably Sunday.

There are a few sights between San Antonio and Austin, then whatever I can find there. I did not have time to research Austin so it will be what I find as I go along.

Until next time.....